Euripides: Ion. Hippolytus. Medea. Alcestis

Euripides

THE LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY

EDITED BY

T. E. PAGE, M.A., AND W. H. D. ROUSE, Litt.D.

EURIPIDES

IV

EURIPIDES

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

ARTHUR S. WAY, D.LIT.

IN FOUR VOLUMES

IV

ION HIPPOLYTUS MEDEA
ALCESTIS

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN CO.
MCMXII

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The life of Euripides coincides with the most strenuous and most triumphant period of Athenian history, strenuous and triumphant not only in action, but in thought, a period of daring enterprise, alike in material conquest and development, and in art, poetry, and philosophic speculation. He was born in 480 B.C., the year of Thermopylae and Salamis. Athens was at the height of her glory and power, and was year by year becoming more and more the City Beautiful, when his genius was in its first flush of creation. He had been writing for more than forty years before the tragedy of the Sicilian Expedition was enacted; and, *felix opportunitate mortis*, he was spared the knowledge of the shameful sequel of Arginusae, the miserable disaster of Aegospotami, the last lingering agony of famished Athens. He died more than a year before these calamities befell.

His father was named Mnesarchides, his mother Kleito. They must have been wealthy, for their son possessed not only considerable property (he had at least once to discharge a "liturgy,"[1] and was "proxenus," or consul, for Magnesia, costly duties both), but also, what was especially rare then, a valuable library. His family must have been well-born, for it is on record that he took part as a boy in certain festivals of Apollo, for which any one of mean birth would have been ineligible.

He appeared in the dramatic arena at a time when it was thronged with competitors, and when it must have been most difficult for a new writer to achieve a position. Aeschylus had just died, after being before the public for 45 years: Sophocles had been for ten years in the front rank, and was to write for fifty years longer, while there were others, forgotten now, but good enough to wrest the victory from these at half the annual dramatic competitions at least. Moreover, the new poet was not content to achieve excellence along the lines laid down by his predecessors and already marked with the stamp of public approval. His genius was original, and he

[1] Perhaps the expense, or part-expense, of equipping a war-ship.

followed it fearlessly, and so became an innovator in his handling of the religious and ethical problems presented by the old legends, in the literary setting he gave to these, and even in the technicalities of stage-presentation. As originality makes conquest of the official judges of literature last, and as his work ran counter to a host of prejudices, honest and otherwise,[1] it is hardly surprising that his plays gained the first prize only five times in fifty years.

But the number of these official recognitions is no index of his real popularity, of his hold on the hearts, not only of his countrymen, but of all who spoke his mother-tongue. It is told how on two occasions the bitterest enemies of Athens so far yielded to his spell, that for his sake they spared to his conquered countrymen, to captured Athens, the last horrors of war, the last humiliation of the vanquished. After death he became, and remained, so long as Greek was a living language, the most popular and the most influential of the three great masters of the drama. His nineteenth-century eclipse has been followed by a reaction in which he is recognised as

[1] "He was baited incessantly by a rabble of comic writers, and of course by the great pack of the orthodox and the vulgar."—MURRAY.

presenting one of the most interesting studies in all literature.

In his seventy-third year he left Athens and his clamorous enemies, to be an honoured guest at the court of the king of Macedon. There, unharassed by the malicious vexations, the political unrest, and the now imminent perils of Athens, he wrote with a freedom, a rapidity, a depth and fervour of thought, and a splendour of diction, which even he had scarcely attained before.

He died in 406 B.C., and, in a revulsion of repentant admiration and love, all Athens, following Sophocles' example, put on mourning for him. Four plays, which were part of the fruits of his Macedonian leisure, were represented at Athens shortly after his death, and were crowned by acclamation with the first prize, in spite of the attempt of Aristophanes, in his comedy of *The Frogs*, a few months before, to belittle his genius.

His characteristics, as compared with those of his two great brother-dramatists, may be concisely stated thus:—

Aeschylus sets forth the operation of *great principles*, especially of the certainty of divine retribution, and of the persistence of sin as an ineradicable plague-

taint. He believes and trembles. Sophocles depicts *great characters*: he ignores the malevolence of destiny and the persistent power of evil: to him "man is man, and master of his fate." He believes with unquestioning faith. Euripides propounds *great moral problems*: he analyses human nature, its instincts, its passions, its motives; he voices the cry of the human soul against the tyranny of the supernatural, the selfishness and cruelty of man, the crushing weight of environment. He questions: "he will not make his judgment blind."

Of more than 90 plays which Euripides wrote, the names of 81 have been preserved, of which 19 are extant—18 tragedies, and one satyric drama, the *Cyclops*. His first play, *The Daughters of Pelias* (lost) was represented in 455 B.C. The extant plays may be arranged, according to the latest authorities, in the following chronological order of representation, the dates in brackets being conjectural: (1) *Rhesus* (probably the earliest); (2) *Cyclops*; (3) *Alcestis*, 438; (4) *Medea*, 431; (5) *Children of Hercules*, (429–427); (6) *Hippolytus*, 428; (7) *Andromache*, (430–424); (8) *Hecuba*, (425); (9) *Suppliants*, (421); (10) *Madness of Hercules*, (423–420); (11) *Ion*, (419–416); (12) *Daughters of Troy*, 415; (13) *Electra*, (413);

(14) *Iphigeneia in Taurica*, (414–412); (15) *Helen*, 412; (16) *Phoenician Maidens*, (411–409); (17) *Orestes*, 408; (18) *Bacchanals*, 405; (19) *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, 405.

In this edition the plays are arranged in three main groups, based on their connexion with (1) the Story of the Trojan War, (2) the Legends of Thebes, (3) the Legends of Athens. The *Alcestis* is a story of old Thessaly. The reader must, however, be prepared to find that the Trojan War series does not present a continuously connected story, nor, in some details, a consistent one. These plays, produced at times widely apart, and not in the order of the story, sometimes present situations (as in *Hecuba*, *Daughters of Troy*, and *Helen*) mutually exclusive, the poet not having followed the same legend throughout the series.

The Greek text of this edition may be called eclectic, being based upon what appeared, after careful consideration, to be the soundest conclusions of previous editors and critics. In only a few instances, and for special reasons, have foot-notes on readings been admitted. Nauck's arrangement of the choruses has been followed, with few exceptions.

The translation (first published 1894–1898) has been revised throughout, with two especial aims,

closer fidelity to the original, and greater lucidity in expression. It is hoped that the many hundreds of corrections will be found to bring it nearer to the attainment of these objects. The version of the *Cyclops,* which was not included in the author's translation of the Tragedies, has been made for this edition. This play has been generally neglected by English translators, the only existing renderings in verse being those of Shelley (1819), and Wodhull (1782).

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

I. *Editiones principes:*—

1. J. Lascaris (Florence, 1496); *Med.*, *Hipp.*, *Alc.*, *Andr.* 2. M. Musurus (Aldus, Venice, 1503); 17 plays, all except *Herc. Fur.* (added in second edition), and *Electra.* 3. P. Victorius; *Electra*, from Florentine Codex (1545).

II. Latest Critical Editions:—

G. Murray (Clar. Press, 1902–09); Prinz-Wecklein (Teubner, Leipzig, 1878–1902).

III. Latest Important Commentaries:—

Paley, all the plays, 3 v. (Whitaker and Bell, 1872–1880); H. Weil, *Sept Tragédies d'Euripide* (Paris, 1878).

IV. Recent Important Monographs on Euripides:—

Decharme's *Euripides and the Spirit of his Dramas* (Paris, 1896), translated by James Loeb (Macmillan, 1906); Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Herakles* (Berlin, 1893); W. Nestle, *Euripides der Dichter der griechischen Aufklärung* (Stuttgart, 1902); P. Masqueray, *Euripide et ses idées* (Paris, 1908); Verrall, *Euripides the Rationalist* (1895), *Four Plays of Euripides* (1905); Tyrrell, *The Bacchants of Euripides and other Essays* (1910); Thomson, *Euripides and the Attic Orators* (1898); Jones, *The Moral Standpoint of Euripides* (1906).

V. Editions of Single Plays:—

Bacchae, by J. E. Sandys (Cambridge Press, 1904), R. Y. Tyrrell (Macmillan, 1896); *Electra*, C. H. Keene (Bell, 1893); *Iph. at Aulis*, E. B. England (Macmillan, 1891); *Iph. in Tauris*, E. B. England (Macmillan, 1883); *Medea*, by A. W. Verrall (Macmillan, 1881–1883); *Orestes*, Wedd (Pitt Press, 1895); *Phoenissae*, by A. C. Pearson (Pitt Press, 1911), J. U. Powell (Constable, 1911); *Troades*, R. Y. Tyrrell (Macmillan, 1897).

ION

ARGUMENT

In *the days when Erechtheus ruled over Athens, Apollo wrought violence to the king's young daughter Creusa. And she, having borne a son, left him, by reason of her fear and shame, in the cave wherein the God had humbled her. But Apollo cared for him, and caused the babe to be brought to Delphi, even to his temple. Therein was the child nurtured, and ministered in the courts of the God's house. And in process of time Erechtheus died, and left no son nor daughter save Creusa, and evil days came upon Athens, that she was hard bestead in war. Then Xuthus, a chief of the Achaean folk, fought for her and prevailed against her Euboean enemies, and for guerdon of victory received the princess Creusa to wife, and so became king-consort in Athens. But to these twain was no child born; so, after many years, they journeyed to Delphi to inquire of the oracle of Apollo touching issue. And there the God ordered all things so that the lost was found, and an heir was given to the royal house of Athens. Yet, through the blind haste of mortals, and their little faith, was the son well-nigh slain by the mother, and the mother by the son.*

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΕΡΜΗΣ
ΙΩΝ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΙΔΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ΞΟΥΘΟΣ
ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΗΣ
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ
ΠΥΘΙΑ *ἤτοι* ΠΡΟΦΗΤΙΣ
ΑΘΗΝΑ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

HERMES, *the messenger of the Gods.*

ION, *son of Apollo and Creusa.*

CREUSA, *Queen of Athens, Daughter of Erechtheus, and wife of Xuthus.*

XUTHUS, *an Achaean chief, king-consort of Athens.*

OLD SERVANT (*of Erechtheus formerly, then of Creusa*)

SERVANT (*of Xuthus*).

PYTHIA, *the Prophetess of the temple.*

ATHENA, *Patron-goddess of Athens.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Handmaids attendant on Creusa.*

Attendants, priests, guards, and Delphian citizens.

SCENE: At Delphi, in the fore-court of the temple of Pythian Apollo, who is called also Phoebus, and Loxias. The great altar of sacrifice stands in the centre.

ΙΩΝ

ΕΡΜΗΣ

Ἄτλας, ὁ χαλκέοισι νώτοις οὐρανὸν
θεῶν παλαιὸν οἶκον ἐκτρίβων, θεῶν
μιᾶς ἔφυσε Μαῖαν, ἣ 'μ' ἐγείνατο
Ἑρμῆν μεγίστῳ Ζηνί, δαιμόνων λάτριν.
ἥκω δὲ Δελφῶν τήνδε γῆν, ἵν' ὀμφαλὸν
μέσον καθίζων Φοῖβος ὑμνῳδεῖ βροτοῖς
τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα θεσπίζων ἀεί.
ἔστιν γὰρ οὐκ ἄσημος Ἑλλήνων πόλις,
τῆς χρυσολόγχου Παλλάδος κεκλημένη,
οὗ παῖδ' Ἐρεχθέως Φοῖβος ἔζευξεν γάμοις
βίᾳ Κρέουσαν, ἔνθα προσβόρρους πέτρας
Παλλάδος ὑπ' ὄχθῳ τῆς Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς
Μακρὰς καλοῦσι γῆς ἄνακτες Ἀτθίδος.
ἀγνὼς δὲ πατρί, τῷ θεῷ γὰρ ἦν φίλον,
γαστρὸς διήνεγκ' ὄγκον· ὡς δ' ἦλθεν χρόνος,
τεκοῦσ' ἐν οἴκοις παῖδ' ἀπήνεγκεν βρέφος
εἰς ταὐτὸν ἄντρον οὗπερ ηὐνάσθη θεῷ
Κρέουσα, κἀκτίθησιν ὡς θανούμενον
κοίλης ἐν ἀντίπηγος εὐτρόχῳ κύκλῳ,
προγόνων νόμον σῴζουσα τοῦ τε γηγενοῦς
Ἐριχθονίου· κείνῳ γὰρ ἡ Διὸς κόρη
φρουρὼ παραζεύξασα φύλακε σώματος
δισσὼ δράκοντε, παρθένοις Ἀγλαυρίσι

ION

Enter HERMES.

HERMES

ATLAS, whose brazen shoulders wear the base
Of heaven, the ancient home of Gods, begat
Of a certain Goddess[1] Maia, which bare me,
Hermes, heaven's messenger, to Zeus most high.
Now to this Delphian land I come, where Phoebus
Hath at earth's navel his prophetic seat,
Revealing things that are and things to be.

There is a famous city of the Greeks,
Named Burg of Pallas of the Golden Spear.
There Phoebus forced Erechtheus' child Creusa,
Where the north-facing rocks, beneath the Mount
Of Pallas in the Athenian land, are called
The Long Cliffs by the lords of Attica.
Naught knew her sire—for this was Phoebus' will—
The burden 'neath her heart; but in due time
She travailed in his halls, and brought the babe
Unto the selfsame cave wherein the God
Had humbled her, and left it there to die
In the fair-rounded hollow of an ark,
Still keeping the tradition of her race
And earth-born Erichthonius, by whom
Zeus' Daughter set for warders of his life
Two serpents, ere to the Agraulid maids

[1] Pleione, daughter of Ocean.

δίδωσι σῴζειν· ὅθεν Ἐρεχθείδαις ἔτι
νόμος τις ἔστιν ὄφεσιν ἐν χρυσηλάτοις
τρέφειν τέκν᾽. ἀλλ᾽ ἣν εἶχε παρθένος χλιδὴν
τέκνῳ προσάψασ᾽ ἔλιπεν ὡς θανουμένῳ.
καί μ᾽ ὢν ἀδελφὸς Φοῖβος αἰτεῖται τάδε·
ὦ σύγγον᾽, ἐλθὼν λαὸν εἰς αὐτόχθονα
κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν, οἶσθα γὰρ θεᾶς πόλιν,
λαβὼν βρέφος νεογνὸν ἐκ κοίλης πέτρας
αὐτῷ σὺν ἄγγει σπαργάνοισί θ᾽ οἷς ἔχει
ἔνεγκε Δελφῶν τἀμὰ πρὸς χρηστήρια
καὶ θὲς πρὸς αὐταῖς εἰσόδοις δόμων ἐμῶν.
τὰ δ᾽ ἄλλ᾽, ἐμὸς γάρ ἐστιν, ὡς εἰδῇς, ὁ παῖς,
ἡμῖν μελήσει. Λοξίᾳ δ᾽ ἐγὼ χάριν
πράσσων ἀδελφῷ πλεκτὸν ἐξάρας κύτος
ἤνεγκα καὶ τὸν παῖδα κρηπίδων ἔπι
τίθημι ναοῦ τοῦδ᾽, ἀναπτύξας κύτος
εἱλικτὸν ἀντίπηγος, ὡς ὁρῷθ᾽ ὁ παῖς.
κυρεῖ δ᾽ ἅμ᾽ ἱππεύοντος ἡλίου κύκλῳ
προφῆτις εἰσβαίνουσα μαντεῖον θεοῦ·
ὄψιν δὲ προσβαλοῦσα παιδὶ νηπίῳ
ἐθαύμασ᾽ εἴ τις Δελφίδων τλαίη κόρη
λαθραῖον ὠδῖν᾽ εἰς θεοῦ ῥῖψαι δόμον,
ὑπὲρ δὲ θυμέλας διορίσαι πρόθυμος ἦν·
οἴκτῳ δ᾽ ἀφῆκεν ὠμότητα, καὶ θεὸς
συνεργὸς ἦν τῷ παιδὶ μὴ ᾽κπεσεῖν δόμων.
τρέφει δέ νιν λαβοῦσα· τὸν σπείραντα δὲ
οὐκ οἶδε Φοῖβον οὐδὲ μητέρ᾽ ἧς ἔφυ,
ὁ παῖς τε τοὺς τεκόντας οὐκ ἐπίσταται.
νέος μὲν οὖν ὢν ἀμφὶ βωμίους τροφὰς
ἠλᾶτ᾽ ἀθύρων· ὡς δ᾽ ἀπηνδρώθη δέμας,
Δελφοί σφ᾽ ἔθεντο χρυσοφύλακα τοῦ θεοῦ
ταμίαν τε πάντων πιστόν, ἐν δ᾽ ἀνακτόροις

She gave the babe to nurse. For this cause there
The Erechtheids use to hang about their babes
Serpents of gold. Yea, broidery from her robe
She tied to her babe, and left him, as for death.
Then did my brother Phoebus ask me this:
"Go, brother, to the earth-born folk of Athens
The glorious,—for thou know'st Athena's burg,—
And from the rock-cleft take a babe new-born,
With cradle and with swaddling-bands withal,
And bear to Delphi, to mine oracle,
And set him at my temple's entering-in.
All else be mine: for this—that thou mayst know,—
Is my son." For a grace to Loxias
My brother, took I up the woven ark,
And bare, and on the basement of this fane
I set him, opening first the cradle's lid
With-woven, that the boy might so be seen.
And, as the sun drove forth his chariot, passed
A priestess into the prophetic shrine,
Who, casting eyes upon the wordless babe,
Marvelled that any Delphian maid should dare
Into the God's house fling her child of shame,
And o'er the holy pale in zeal had thrust;
But pity banished cruelty: yea, the God
Wrought that the boy be not cast forth his fane.
So took she him and nursed, nor knew the sire
Was Phoebus, nor the reckling's mother knew;
Nor knows the boy who brought him into life.
So did the youngling round the altars sport
That fed him. When to manhood waxed his frame,
The Delphians made him treasurer of the God,
And trusted steward of all; and in the fane

θεοῦ καταζῇ δεῦρ' ἀεὶ σεμνὸν βίον.
Κρέουσα δ' ἡ τεκοῦσα τὸν νεανίαν
Ξούθῳ γαμεῖται συμφορᾶς τοιᾶσδ' ὕπο.
ἦν ταῖς Ἀθήναις τοῖς τε Χαλκωδοντίδαις,
οἳ γῆν ἔχουσ' Εὐβοΐδα, πολέμιος κλύδων·
ὃν συμπονήσας καὶ ξυνεξελὼν δορὶ
γάμων Κρεούσης ἀξίωμ' ἐδέξατο,
οὐκ ἐγγενὴς ὤν, Αἰόλου δὲ τοῦ Διὸς
γεγὼς Ἀχαιός· χρόνια δὲ σπείρας λέχη
ἄτεκνός ἐστι, καὶ Κρέουσ'· ὧν εἵνεκα
ἥκουσι πρὸς μαντεῖ' Ἀπόλλωνος τάδε,
ἔρωτι παίδων. Λοξίας δὲ τὴν τύχην
εἰς τοῦτ' ἐλαύνει, κοὐ λέληθεν, ὡς δοκεῖ.
δώσει γὰρ εἰσελθόντι μαντεῖον τόδε
Ξούθῳ τὸν αὑτοῦ παῖδα, καὶ πεφυκέναι
κείνου σφε φήσει, μητρὸς ὡς ἐλθὼν δόμους
γνωσθῇ Κρεούσῃ, καὶ γάμοι τε Λοξίου
κρυπτοὶ γένωνται παῖς τ' ἔχῃ τὰ πρόσφορα.
Ἴωνα δ' αὐτόν, κτίστορ' Ἀσιάδος χθονός,
ὄνομα κεκλῆσθαι θήσεται καθ' Ἑλλάδα.
ἀλλ' εἰς δαφνώδη γύαλα βήσομαι τάδε,
τὸ κρανθὲν ὡς ἂν ἐκμάθω παιδὸς πέρι.
ὁρῶ γὰρ ἐκβαίνοντα Λοξίου γόνον
τόνδ', ὡς πρὸ ναοῦ λαμπρὰ θῇ πυλώματα
δάφνης κλάδοισιν. ὄνομα δ', οὗ μέλλει τυχεῖν,
Ἴων' ἐγώ σφε πρῶτος ὀνομάζω θεῶν.

ΙΩΝ

ἅρματα μὲν τάδε λαμπρὰ τεθρίππων
ἥλιος ἤδη λάμπει κατὰ γῆν,
ἄστρα δὲ φεύγει πῦρ τόδ' ἀπ' αἰθέρος

He liveth to this day a hallowed life.
But she, Creusa, that had borne the lad,
Was wed to Xuthus, by such hap as this:—
A surge of war 'twixt Athens rose and them
That in Euboea hold Chalcidice;
Then on their side he fought, and smote their foes,
And for his guerdon won Creusa's hand—
An alien, yet Achaean born, and son
Of Aeolus son of Zeus. But, after years
Of wedlock, childless are they, for which cause
To this shrine of Apollo have they come,
Yearning for seed. Now Loxias guides their fate
Hereto, nor hath forgotten, as might seem.
He shall give Xuthus, when he entereth,
His own child, saying to him, "Lo, thy son,"
That the lad, coming home, made known may be
Unto Creusa, Loxias' deed abide
Unknown, and so the child may have his right.
And Ion shall he cause him to be called
Through Greece, the founder of an Asian realm.
Now to yon hollow bay-embowered I go
To watch how destiny dealeth with the lad.
For yonder see I Loxias' child come forth
To make the temple-portals bright with boughs
Of bay. And by the name that he shall bear,
Ion, do I first name him of the Gods. [*Exit.*

Enter ION, *followed by a throng of Delphian worshippers.*

ION

Lo, yonder the Sun-god is turning to earthward his splendour-blazing
Chariot of light;
And the stars from the firmament flee from the fiery arrows chasing,

εἰς νύχθ' ἱεράν,
Παρνησιάδες δ' ἄβατοι κορυφαὶ
καταλαμπόμεναι τὴν ἡμερίαν
ἁψῖδα βροτοῖσι δέχονται.
σμύρνης δ' ἀνύδρου καπνὸς εἰς ὀρόφους
Φοίβου πέτεται.
θάσσει δὲ γυνὴ τρίποδα ζάθεον
Δελφίς, ἀείδουσ' Ἕλλησι βοάς,
ἃς ἂν Ἀπόλλων κελαδήσῃ.
ἀλλ', ὦ Φοίβου Δελφοὶ θέραπες,
τὰς Κασταλίας ἀργυροειδεῖς
βαίνετε δίνας, καθαραῖς δὲ δρόσοις
φαιδρυνάμενοι στείχετε ναούς·
στόμα τ' εὔφημον φρουρεῖτ' ἀγαθόν,
φήμας τ' ἀγαθὰς
τοῖς ἐθέλουσιν μαντεύεσθαι
γλώσσης ἰδίας ἀποφαίνειν.
ἡμεῖς δέ, πόνους οὓς ἐκ παιδὸς
μοχθοῦμεν ἀεί, πτόρθοισι δάφνης
στέφεσίν θ' ἱεροῖς ἐσόδους Φοίβου
καθαρὰς θήσομεν, ὑγραῖς τε πέδον
ῥανίσιν νοτερόν, πτηνῶν τ' ἀγέλας,
αἳ βλάπτουσιν σέμν' ἀναθήματα,
τόξοισιν ἐμοῖς φυγάδας θήσομεν·
ὡς γὰρ ἀμήτωρ ἀπάτωρ τε γεγὼς
τοὺς θρέψαντας
Φοίβου ναοὺς θεραπεύω.

ἄγ' ὦ νεηθαλὲς ὦ στρ.
καλλίστας προπόλευμα δάφνας,
ἃ τὰν Φοίβου θυμέλαν
σαίρεις, ὑπὸ ναοῖς

To the sacred night:
And the crests of Parnassus untrodden are flaming
and flushed, as with yearning [daylight returning
Of welcome to far-flashing wheels with the glory of
To mortal sight.
To the roof-ridge of Phoebus the fume of the incense
of Araby burning
As a bird taketh flight. [Maiden
On the tripod most holy is seated the Delphian
Chanting to children of Hellas the wild cries, laden
With doom, from the lips of Apollo that ring.
Delphians, Phoebus's priesthood-train,
Unto Castaly's silvery-swirling spring
Pass ye, and cleanse with the pure spray-rain
Your bodies, or ever ye enter his fane.
Set a watch on the door of your lips; be there heard
Nothing but good in the secret word
That ye murmur to them whose hearts be stirred
To seek to his shrine, that they seek not in vain.
And I in the toil that is mine—mine now, [bough,
And from childhood up,—with the bay's young
And with wreathèd garlands holy, will cleanse
The portals of Phoebus; with dews from the spring
Will I sprinkle his pavement, and chase far thence
With the shaft from the string
The flocks of the birds: the defilers shall flee
From his offerings holy. Nor mother is mine
Neither father: his temple hath nurtured me,
And I serve his shrine.

Come, branch in thy freshness yet blowing, (*Str.*)
God's minister, loveliest bay,
Over the altar-steps glide:
In the gardens immortal, beside

κήπων ἐξ ἀθανάτων,
ἵνα δρόσοι τέγγουσ' ἱεραί,
†τὰν ἀέναον παγὰν
ἐκπροϊεῖσαι
μυρσίνας, ἱερὰν φόβαν
ᾇ σαίρω δάπεδον θεοῦ
παναμέριος ἅμ' ἁλίου
πτέρυγι θοᾷ
λατρεύων τὸ κατ' ἦμαρ.
ὦ Παιὰν ὦ Παιάν,
εὐαίων εὐαίων
εἴης, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ.

καλόν γε τὸν πόνον, ὦ ἀντ.
Φοῖβε, σοὶ πρὸ δόμων λατρεύω
τιμῶν μαντεῖον ἕδραν·
κλεινὸς δ' ὁ πόνος μοι
θεοῖσιν δούλαν χέρ' ἔχειν,
οὐ θνατοῖς ἀλλ' ἀθανάτοις·
εὐφάμους δὲ πόνους μοχθεῖν
οὐκ ἀποκάμνω.
Φοῖβός μοι γενέτωρ πατήρ·
τὸν βόσκοντα γὰρ εὐλογῶ,
τὸ δ' ὠφέλιμον ἐμοὶ πατέρος
ὄνομα λέγω,
Φοίβου τοῦ κατὰ ναόν.
ὦ Παιὰν ὦ Παιάν,
εὐαίων εὐαίων
εἴης, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ.

ἀλλ' ἐκπαύσω γὰρ μόχθους
δάφνας ὁλκοῖς,

His temple, hath burgeoned thy pride,
Where the sacred waters are flowing
Through a veil of the myrtle spray,
A fountain that leapeth aye
O'er thy tresses divine to pour.
I wave thee o'er Phoebus' floor
As the sun's wing soars sudden-glowing.
Such service is mine each day.
O Healer, O Healer-king,
Let blessing on blessing upring
Unto Leto's Son as I sing!

'Tis my glory, the service I render (*Ant.*)
In thy portals, O Phoebus, to thee!
I honour thy prophet-shrine.
Proud labour is mine—it is thine!
I am thrall to the Gods divine:
Not to men, but Immortals, I tender
My bondage; 'tis glorious and free:
Never faintness shall fall upon me.
For my father thee, Phoebus, I praise,
Who hast nurtured me all my days:
My begetter, mine help, my defender
This temple's Phoebus shall be.
O Healer, O Healer-king,
Let blessing on blessing upring
Unto Leto's Son as I sing!

But—for now from the toil I refrain
Of the bay-boughs softly trailing,—

χρυσέων δ' ἐκ τευχέων ῥίψω
γαίας παγάν,
ἃν ἀποχεύονται
Κασταλίας δῖναι,
νοτερὸν ὕδωρ βάλλων,
ὅσιος ἀπ' εὐνᾶς ὤν.
εἴθ' οὕτως αἰεὶ Φοίβῳ
λατρεύων μὴ παυσαίμαν,
ἢ παυσαίμαν ἀγαθᾷ μοίρᾳ.

ἔα ἔα·
φοιτῶσ' ἤδη λείπουσίν τε
πτανοὶ Παρνασοῦ κοίτας·
αὐδῶ μὴ χρίμπτειν θριγκοῖς
μηδ' εἰς χρυσήρεις οἴκους.
μάρψω σ' αὖ τόξοις, ὦ Ζηνὸς
κῆρυξ, ὀρνίθων γαμφηλαῖς
ἰσχὺν νικῶν.

ὅδε πρὸς θυμέλας ἄλλος ἐρέσσει
κύκνος· οὐκ ἄλλᾳ
φοινικοφαῆ πόδα κινήσεις;
οὐδέν σ' ἁ φόρμιγξ ἁ Φοίβου
σύμμολπος τόξων ῥύσαιτ' ἄν·
πάραγε πτέρυγας,
λίμνας ἐπίβα τᾶς Δηλιάδος·
αἱμάξεις, εἰ μὴ πείσει,
τὰς καλλιφθόγγους ᾠδάς.

ἔα ἔα·
τίς ὅδ' ὀρνίθων καινὸς προσέβα;
μῶν ὑπὸ θριγκοὺς εὐναίας
καρφηρὰς θήσων τέκνοις;

From the pitchers of gold shall I rain
The drops from the breast unfailing
Of the earth that spring
Where the foambell-ring
Round Castaly's fount goeth sailing.
It rains, it rains from my fingers fast,
From the hands of the undefiled wide-cast.
O that to Phoebus for ever so
I might render service, nor respite know,
Except unto happier lot I go!

Flights of birds are seen approaching.

Ho there, ho there!
Even now are they flocking, the fowl of the air,
On Parnassus forsaking each crag-hung lair.
Touch not, I warn ye, the temple's coping,
Nor the roofs with the glistering gold slant-sloping.
Ha, my bow shall o'ertake thee again from afar,
Zeus' herald, whose talons victorious war
On the birds that strongest are.

Lo, yonder the pinion-oars come rowing
Of another, a swan, to the altar:—away!
Speed hence thy feet in the dawn rose-glowing;
Else Phoebus's lyre, that accordeth its lay
To thy notes, from death shall redeem not thee.
Waft onward thy wings of snow:
Light down on the Delian mere oversea,
Lest the blood-rush choke, if thou do not so,
Thy sweet throat's melody.

Ha, what new fowl cometh hitherward winging?
Under our coping fain would he build
A nest for his young from the stubble-field?

ψαλμοί σ' εἴρξουσιν τόξων.
οὐ πείσει; χωρῶν δίνας
τὰς Ἀλφειοῦ παιδούργει
ἢ νάπος Ἴσθμιον,
ὡς ἀναθήματα μὴ βλάπτηται
ναοί θ' οἱ Φοίβου.

κτείνειν δ' ὑμᾶς αἰδοῦμαι
τοὺς θεῶν ἀγγέλλοντας φάμας
θνατοῖς· οἷς δ' ἔγκειμαι μόχθοις,
Φοίβῳ δουλεύσω, κοὐ λήξω
τοὺς βόσκοντας θεραπεύων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

οὐκ ἐν ταῖς ζαθέαις Ἀθά- στρ.
ναις εὐκίονες ἦσαν αὐ-
λαὶ θεῶν μόνον, οὐδ' ἀγυι-
άτιδες θεραπεῖαι·
ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ Λοξίᾳ
τῷ Λατοῦς διδύμων προσώ-
πων καλλιβλέφαρον φῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ β'

ἰδοὺ τάνδ', ἄθρησον,
Λερναῖον ὕδραν ἐναίρει
χρυσέαις ἅρπαις ὁ Διὸς παῖς·
φίλα, πρόσιδ' ὄσσοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

ἀθρῶ. καὶ πέλας ἄλλος αὐ- ἀντ.
τοῦ πανὸν πυρίφλεκτον αἴ-
ρει τις· ἆρ' ὃς ἐμαῖσι μυ-
θεύεται παρὰ πήναις

It shall hold thee aloof, my bow's fierce singing!
Wilt thou heed not? Away, let thy nurslings hide
Where the swirls of Alpheius coil and slide,
Or mid Isthmian glens and groves,
That the offerings undefiled may abide,
And the temples that Phoebus loves.

Loth were I to slaughter such as ye,
Which bear unto mortals the augury
Of the Gods: but a burden is laid upon me:
I am Phœbus' thrall, and I will not refrain
My service to them that my life sustain.

Enter CHORUS *of Creusa's Handmaids. They move to right and left, admiring the sculptures on the walls of the temple. Members of Chorus chant in turn:—*

CHORUS 1

Not in Athens alone then, the city divine, (*Str.*)
Stand courts of the Gods, with line on line
Of stately columns; nor service is thine
There only, O Highway-king.
Lo here, how in Loxias' holy place
The son of Latona hath splendour and grace
Of a twofold-gleaming temple-face.

CHORUS 2

Ah, look thou, behold this thing—
How with golden scimitar Zeus' Son here
Slayeth the hydra of Lerna's mere:
Dear, one glance hitherward fling!

CHORUS 1

I see it:—and lo, where another anigh (*Ant.*)
Is uplifting a flame-wrapped torch on high!
Who is it—who? On my broidery
Is the hero's story told?

ἀσπιστὰς Ἰόλαος, ὃς
κοινοὺς αἰρόμενος πόνους
Δίῳ παιδὶ συναντλεῖ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ γʹ

καὶ μὰν τόνδ' ἄθρησον
πτεροῦντος ἔφεδρον ἵππου·
τὰν πῦρ πνέουσαν ἐναίρει
τρισώματον ἀλκάν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ αʹ

παντᾷ τοι βλέφαρον διώ-
κω. σκέψαι κλόνον ἐν τείχε-
σι λαΐνοισι Γιγάντων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ δʹ

ὧδε δερκόμεθ', ὦ φίλαι,†

ΧΟΡΟΣ εʹ

λεύσσεις οὖν ἐπ' Ἐγκελάδῳ
γοργωπὸν πάλλουσαν ἴτυν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ϛʹ

λεύσσω Παλλάδ', ἐμὰν θεόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζʹ

τί γάρ, κεραυνὸν
ἀμφίπυρον ὄβριμον ἐν Διὸς
ἑκηβόλοισι χερσίν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ηʹ

ὁρῶ, τὸν δάιον
Μίμαντα πυρὶ καταιθαλοῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ θʹ

καὶ Βρόμιος ἄλλον ἀπολέμοισι
κισσίνοισι βάκτροις
ἐναίρει Γᾶς τέκνων ὁ Βακχεύς.

Is it not Iolaüs, the warrior there,
Who had part in the dread emprise, and a share
In the burdens that Zeus's scion bare?

CHORUS 3

Lo, lo, this other behold
Who rideth a winged horse, dealing death
To a dragon that vomiteth fiery breath,
A monster of shape threefold.

CHORUS 1

O yea, mine eyes turn swiftly on all . . . .
But O, see there on the marble wall
The battle-rout of the giant horde!

CHORUS 4

Yea, friends, we be gazing thitherward.

CHORUS 5

Dost mark who there on the stricken field
O'er Enceladus waveth her Gorgon-shield?

CHORUS 6

Pallas, my Goddess!—I see her stand!

CHORUS 7

Lo, lo, where the bolt flame-flashing
Gleameth in Zeus' far-hurling hand
In resistless rush down-crashing.

CHORUS 8

I see:—upon Mimas his foe is the brand
With its blasting wildfire dashing.

CHORUS 9

And the earth-born there—no battle-wand
Is the ivy-encircled thyrsus-rod
That slays him, of Bromius, Reveller-god.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ι′
σέ τοι τὸν παρὰ ναὸν αὐ-
δῶ· θέμις γυάλων ὑπερ-
βῆναι λευκῷ ποδὶ βηλόν ;[1]

ΙΩΝ
οὐ θέμις, ὦ ξέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ια′
οὐδ' ἂν ἐκ σέθεν ἂν πυθοίμαν αὐδάν ;

ΙΩΝ
τίνα τήνδε θέλεις ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ια′
ἆρ' ὄντως μέσον ὀμφαλὸν
γᾶς Φοίβου κατέχει δόμος ;

ΙΩΝ
στέμμασί γ' ἐνδυτόν, ἀμφὶ δὲ γοργόνες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ιβ′
οὕτω καὶ φάτις αὐδᾷ.

ΙΩΝ
εἰ μὲν ἐθύσατε πέλανον πρὸ δόμων
καί τι πυθέσθαι χρῄζετε Φοίβου,
πάριτ' εἰς θυμέλας, ἐπὶ δ' ἀσφάκτοις
μήλοισι δόμων μὴ πάριτ' εἰς μυχόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ιγ′
ἔχω μαθοῦσα·
θεοῦ δὲ νόμον οὐ παραβαίνομεν·
ἃ δ' ἐκτός, ὄμμα τέρψει.

ΙΩΝ
πάντα θεᾶσθ', ὅ τι καὶ θέμις, ὄμμασι.

[1] Hermann : for ποδί γ' of MSS.

CHORUS 10 (*addressing* ION)

Sir,—thou by the fane,—I would speak unto thee:
Prithee say, if with bare feet lawful it is
That the threshold we pass of the sanctuary.

ION

Nay, strangers, forfended is this.

CHORUS 11

Yet haply a thing I would learn wouldst thou show?

ION

What is this that thou cravest to know?

CHORUS 11

Is it so, that the walls of Phoebus rise
Even there, where Earth's mid-navel lies?

ION

Yea: and with wreaths is it hung, and watched by the Gorgon-eyes.

CHORUS 12

Ay, rumour hath published it so.

ION

If a cake ye have cast on the forecourt's altar-fire,
And if there be aught that of Phoebus ye fain would inquire,
Draw nigh to the altar-steps: into the inner fane
Pass none, but with bloodshed of sheep for the sacrifice slain.

CHORUS 13

All this understand I aright:
We would trespass on naught by the God's law hidden:
Enough is without for our feast of sight.

ION

Let your eyes gaze on upon all unforbidden.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ιδ′

μεθεῖσαν δεσπόται
με θεοῦ γύαλα τάδ' εἰσιδεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

δμωαὶ δὲ τίνων κλῄζεσθε δόμων ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ιε′

Παλλάδος ἔνοικα τρόφιμα μέλαθρα
τῶν ἐμῶν τυράννων·
παρούσας δ' ἀμφὶ τᾶσδ' ἐρωτᾷς.

ΙΩΝ

γενναιότης σοι, καὶ τρόπων τεκμήριον
τὸ σχῆμ' ἔχεις τόδ', ἥτις εἶ ποτ', ὦ γύναι.
γνοίη δ' ἂν ὡς τὰ πολλά γ' ἀνθρώπου πέρι
τὸ σχῆμ' ἰδών τις εἰ πέφυκεν εὐγενής.
ἔα·
ἀλλ' ἐξέπληξάς μ', ὄμμα συγκλῄσασα σὸν
δακρύοις θ' ὑγράνασ' εὐγενῆ παρηίδα,
ὡς εἶδες ἁγνὰ Λοξίου χρηστήρια.
τί ποτε μερίμνης εἰς τόδ' ἦλθες, ὦ γύναι ;
οὗ πάντες ἄλλοι γύαλα λεύσσοντες θεοῦ
χαίρουσιν, ἐνταῦθ' ὄμμα σὸν δακρυρροεῖ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ ξένε, τὸ μὲν σὸν οὐκ ἀπαιδεύτως ἔχει
εἰς θαύματ' ἐλθεῖν δακρύων ἐμῶν πέρι·
ἐγὼ δ' ἰδοῦσα τούσδ' Ἀπόλλωνος δόμους
μνήμην παλαιὰν ἀνεμετρησάμην τινά·
οἴκοι δὲ τὸν νοῦν ἔσχον ἐνθάδ' οὖσά περ.
ὦ τλήμονες γυναῖκες· ὦ τολμήματα
θεῶν. τί δῆτα ; ποῖ δίκην ἀνοίσομεν,
εἰ τῶν κρατούντων ἀδικίαις ὀλούμεθα ;

ΙΩΝ

τί χρῆμ' ἀνερμήνευτα δυσθυμεῖ, γύναι ;

CHORUS 14

Our lady had given us leave,—"Upon all
These shrines," hath she said, "may ye gaze."

ION

And the servants ye name you of what lord's hall?

CHORUS 15

In Pallas's dwelling-place
Is the mansion of princes that nurtured me;—
But of whom thou inquirest, lo, here is she.

Enter CREUSA.

ION

High birth is thine, and carriage consonant
Thereto, O lady, whosoe'er thou be.
Yea, in a man ofttimes may one discern,
Marking his bearing, strain of gentle blood.
Ha, thou dost move me strangely!—down-dropt eyes,
And noble cheeks all wet with rain of tears,
At sight of Loxias' pure oracle!
How cam'st thou, lady, 'neath such load of care?
Where all beside, beholding the God's shrines,
Rejoice, a fountain is thine eye of tears.

CREUSA

Stranger, I count it not discourtesy
That thou shouldst marvel touching these my tears.
But, looking on Apollo's dwelling-place,
I traversed o'er an ancient memory's track:
Afar my thoughts were, and my body here.
Ah, wrongs of women!—wrongful-reckless deeds
Of Gods! For justice where shall we make suit,
If 'tis our Lords' injustice crushes us?

ION

Lady, for what veiled grief art thou cast down?

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐδέν· μεθῆκα τόξα· τἀπὶ τῷδε δὲ
ἐγώ τε σιγῶ καὶ σὺ μὴ φρόντιζ' ἔτι.

ΙΩΝ

τίς δ' εἶ; πόθεν γῆς ἦλθες; ἐκ ποίου πατρὸς
πέφυκας; ὄνομα τί σε καλεῖν ἡμᾶς χρεών;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Κρέουσα μέν μοι τοὔνομ', ἐκ δ' Ἐρεχθέως
πέφυκα, πατρὶς γῆ δ' Ἀθηναίων πόλις.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ κλεινὸν οἰκοῦσ' ἄστυ γενναίων τ' ἄπο
τραφεῖσα πατέρων, ὥς σε θαυμάζω, γύναι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τοσαῦτα κεὐτυχοῦμεν, ὦ ξέν', οὐ πέρα.

ΙΩΝ

πρὸς θεῶν ἀληθῶς, ὡς μεμύθευται βροτοῖς,

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί χρῆμ' ἐρωτᾷς, ὦ ξέν'; ἐκμαθεῖν θέλω.

ΙΩΝ

ἐκ γῆς πατρός σου πρόγονος ἔβλαστεν πατήρ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Ἐριχθόνιός γε· τὸ δὲ γένος μ' οὐκ ὠφελεῖ.

ΙΩΝ

ἦ καί σφ' Ἀθάνα γῆθεν ἐξανείλετο;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἰς παρθένους γε χεῖρας, οὐ τεκοῦσά νιν.

ΙΩΝ

δίδωσι δ', ὥσπερ ἐν γραφῇ νομίζεται;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Κέκροπός γε σῴζειν παισὶν οὐκ ὁρώμενον.

ΙΩΝ

ἤκουσα λῦσαι παρθένους τεῦχος θεᾶς.

CREUSA

Naught: I have sped my shaft: as touching this,
Nothing I say, nor thou conjecture aught.

ION

Who art thou? What thy country? Of what sire
Wert born? What name is meet we name thee by?

CREUSA

Creusa I, of King Erechtheus born:
The Athenians' city is my fatherland.

ION

O dweller in a glorious burg, and sprung
Of noble sires!—blest I account thee, lady.

CREUSA

Thus far, nor farther, stranger, goes my weal.

ION

Ah, is it true, the legend told to men—

CREUSA

What wouldst thou, stranger, ask? I fain would learn.

ION

That from the earth thy father's grandsire sprang?

CREUSA

Yea, Erichthonius:—me his birth avails not.

ION

And did Athena take him forth the earth?

CREUSA

Yea, in her maiden arms: no mother she.

ION

And gave it, as the pictured legend tells—

CREUSA

To Cecrops' daughters to be nursed unseen.

ION

The maids unsealed, I heard, Athena's ark.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τοιγὰρ θανοῦσαι σκόπελον ᾕμαξαν πέτρας.

ΙΩΝ

εἶεν·
τί δαὶ τόδ'; ἆρ' ἀληθὲς ἢ μάτην λόγος;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί χρῆμ' ἐρωτᾷς; καὶ γὰρ οὐ κάμνω σχολῇ.

ΙΩΝ

πατὴρ Ἐρεχθεὺς σὰς ἔθυσε συγγόνους;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔτλη πρὸ γαίας σφάγια παρθένους κτανεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

σὺ δ' ἐξεσώθης πῶς κασιγνήτων μόνη;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

βρέφος νεογνὸν μητρὸς ἦν ἐν ἀγκάλαις.

ΙΩΝ

πατέρα δ' ἀληθῶς χάσμα σὸν κρύπτει χθονός;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πληγαὶ τριαίνης ποντίου σφ' ἀπώλεσαν.

ΙΩΝ

Μακραὶ δὲ χῶρός ἐστ' ἐκεῖ κεκλημένος;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί δ' ἱστορεῖς τόδ'; ὥς μ' ἀνέμνησάς τινος.

ΙΩΝ

τιμᾷ σφε Πύθιος ἀστραπαί τε Πύθιαι;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τιμᾷ—τί τιμᾷ;[1] μήποτ' ὤφελόν σφ' ἰδεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

τί δέ; στυγεῖς σὺ τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ φίλτατα;

[1] Hermann: for MSS. τιμᾷ τιμᾷ.

CREUSA

Then hurled themselves down blood-sprent cliffs to death.

ION

Ah, so!
And this—true is it, or an idle tale?—

CREUSA

What wouldst thou ask? My leisure serveth me.

ION

Thy sisters did thy sire Erechtheus slay?

CREUSA

He endured to sacrifice them for his land.

ION

How wast thou only of thy sisters saved?

CREUSA

A babe new-born in mother's arms was I.

ION

And did earth yawning verily hide thy sire?

CREUSA

The Sea-god's trident smote him and destroyed.

ION

The Long Cliffs—is a place so named therein?

CREUSA

Why dost ask this?—thou wak'st a memory.

ION

Phoebus with Pythian lightnings honours them.

CREUSA

Honours them, quotha! O to have seen them never!

ION

What?—hatest thou the God's haunt well-beloved?

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
οὐδέν· ξύνοιδ' ἄντροισιν αἰσχύνην τινά.

ΙΩΝ
πόσις δὲ τίς σ' ἔγημ' Ἀθηναίων, γύναι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
οὐκ ἀστός, ἀλλ' ἐπακτὸς ἐξ ἄλλης χθονός.

ΙΩΝ
τίς ; εὐγενῆ νιν δεῖ πεφυκέναι τινά.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
Ξοῦθος, πεφυκὼς Αἰόλου Διός τ' ἄπο.

ΙΩΝ
καὶ πῶς ξένος σ' ὢν ἔσχεν οὖσαν ἐγγενῆ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
Εὔβοι' Ἀθήναις ἔστι τις γείτων πόλις·

ΙΩΝ
ὅροις ὑγροῖσιν, ὡς λέγουσ', ὡρισμένη.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ταύτην ἔπερσε Κεκροπίδαις κοινῷ δορί.

ΙΩΝ
ἐπίκουρος ἐλθών ; κᾆτα σὸν γαμεῖ λέχος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
φερνάς γε πολέμου καὶ δορὸς λαβὼν γέρας.

ΙΩΝ
σὺν ἀνδρὶ δ' ἥκεις ἢ μόνη χρηστήρια ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
σὺν ἀνδρί. σηκοῖς δ' ἐνστρέφει Τροφωνίου.

ΙΩΝ
πότερα θεατὴς ἢ χάριν μαντευμάτων ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
κείνου τε Φοίβου θ' ἓν θέλων μαθεῖν ἔπος.

ΙΩΝ
καρποῦ δ' ὕπερ γῆς ἥκετ', ἢ παίδων πέρι ;

CREUSA

Naught.—I and that cave know a deed of shame.

ION

And what Athenian, lady, is thy lord?

CREUSA

No citizen. An outland alien.

ION

Who?—sooth, of princely birth must he have been.

CREUSA

Xuthus, the seed of Aeolus and Zeus.

ION

How might an alien win thee, native-born?

CREUSA

A neighbour state, Euboea, Athens hath;—

ION

Sundered by watery marches, as they tell.

CREUSA

This smote he, spear-ally of Cecrops' sons.

ION

Their war-aid?—and thereafter won thine hand?

CREUSA

His dower of battle, guerdon of his spear.

ION

With thy lord com'st thou hither, or alone?

CREUSA

With him. He lingereth at Trophonius' cave.

ION

To gaze thereon, or for an oracle?

CREUSA

One thing of him and Phoebus would he learn.

ION

For increase of the land, or sons, come ye?

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄπαιδές ἐσμεν, χρόνι' ἔχοντ' εὐνήματα.

ΙΩΝ

οὐδ' ἔτεκες οὐδὲν πώποτ', ἀλλ' ἄτεκνος εἶ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὁ Φοῖβος οἶδε τὴν ἐμὴν ἀπαιδίαν.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ τλῆμον, ὡς τἄλλ' εὐτυχοῦσ' οὐκ εὐτυχεῖς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σὺ δ' εἶ τίς; ὥς σου τὴν τεκοῦσαν ὤλβισα.

ΙΩΝ

τοῦ θεοῦ καλοῦμαι δοῦλος εἰμί τ', ὦ γύναι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀνάθημα πόλεως, ἤ τινος πραθεὶς ὕπο;

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἕν· Λοξίου κεκλήμεθα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἡμεῖς σ' ἄρ' αὖθις, ὦ ξέν', ἀντοικτείρομεν.

ΙΩΝ

ὡς μὴ εἰδόθ' ἥτις μ' ἔτεκεν ἐξ ὅτου τ' ἔφυν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ναοῖσι δ' οἰκεῖς τοισίδ' ἢ κατὰ στέγας;

ΙΩΝ

ἅπαν θεοῦ μοι δῶμ', ἵν' ἂν λάβῃ μ' ὕπνος.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

παῖς δ' ὢν ἀφίκου ναὸν ἢ νεανίας;

ΙΩΝ

βρέφος λέγουσιν οἱ δοκοῦντες εἰδέναι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ τίς γάλακτί σ' ἐξέθρεψε Δελφίδων;

ΙΩΝ

οὐπώποτ' ἔγνων μαστόν· ἡ δ' ἔθρεψέ με—

CREUSA
Childless we are, who have been wedded long.

ION
Never hast thou borne issue, barren all?

CREUSA
Phoebus doth know what childlessness is mine.

ION
Blest in all else, sad heart, unblest in this!

CREUSA
And who art thou? Blessed the womb that bare thee!

ION
Lady, the God's thrall I am called, and am.

CREUSA
Some city's offering?—or in slave-mart sold?

ION
I know but this—I am called Loxias' thrall.

CREUSA
I then in turn, O stranger, pity thee.

ION
As one that never sire nor mother knew.

CREUSA
Dwellest thou in this temple, or a house?

ION
The God's wide halls be mine when I would sleep.

CREUSA
A child, or stripling, cam'st thou to the fane?

ION
A babe was I, say they who best should know.

CREUSA
And who of Delphi's daughters gave thee suck?

ION
Never I knew the breast. Mine only nurse—

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τίς, ὦ ταλαίπωρ'; ὡς νοσοῦσ' ηὗρον νόσους.

ΙΩΝ

Φοίβου προφῆτις, μητέρ' ὣς νομίζομεν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἰς δ' ἄνδρ' ἀφίκου τίνα τροφὴν κεκτημένος;

ΙΩΝ

βωμοί μ' ἔφερβον οὑπιών τ' ἀεὶ ξένος.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τάλαινά σ' ἡ τεκοῦσα· τίς ποτ' ἦν ἄρα;

ΙΩΝ

ἀδίκημά του γυναικὸς ἐγενόμην ἴσως.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔχεις δὲ βίοτον; εὖ γὰρ ἤσκησαι πέπλοις.

ΙΩΝ

τοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ κοσμούμεθ', ᾧ δουλεύομεν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐδ' ᾖξας εἰς ἔρευναν ἐξευρεῖν γονάς;

ΙΩΝ

ἔχω γὰρ οὐδέν, ὦ γύναι, τεκμήριον.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

φεῦ·
πέπονθέ τις σῇ μητρὶ ταὔτ' ἄλλη γυνή.

ΙΩΝ

τίς; εἰ πόνου μοι ξυλλάβοι, χαίροιμεν ἄν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἧς εἵνεκ' ἦλθον δεῦρο πρὶν πόσιν μολεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

ποῖόν τι χρῄζουσ'; ὡς ὑπουργήσω, γύναι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

μάντευμα κρυπτὸν δεομένη Φοίβου μαθεῖν.

CREUSA

Who, child of sorrow? I find my wound in thine!

ION

Was Phoebus' priestess: her I count my mother.

CREUSA

How nurtured hast thou come to man's estate?

ION

The altars fed me: each chance stranger gave.

CREUSA

Woe is thy mother! Ah, and who was she?

ION

I am record haply of a woman's wrong.

CREUSA

And hast thou wealth?—for rich is thine attire.

ION

Of Him is mine adorning, whom I serve.

CREUSA

But on thy birth's track hast thou never pressed?

ION

Ah, lady, clue hereunto have I none.

CREUSA

(*Sighs.*) There's one was even as thy mother wronged.

ION

Who?—would she share my burden, glad were I.

CREUSA

For her sake came I, while delays my lord.

ION

And what thy quest? Lady, mine help is thine.

CREUSA

Craving a secret oracle of Phoebus.

ΙΩΝ

λέγοις ἄν· ἡμεῖς τἄλλα προξενήσομεν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄκουε δὴ τὸν μῦθον· ἀλλ᾽ αἰδούμεθα.

ΙΩΝ

οὔ τἄρα πράξεις οὐδέν· ἀργὸς ἡ θεός.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Φοίβῳ μιγῆναί φησί τις φίλων ἐμῶν.

ΙΩΝ

Φοίβῳ γυνὴ γεγῶσα; μὴ λέγ᾽, ὦ ξένη.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ παῖδά γ᾽ ἔτεκε τῷ θεῷ λάθρᾳ πατρός.

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστιν· ἀνδρὸς ἀδικίαν αἰσχύνεται.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὔ φησιν αὐτή· καὶ πέπονθεν ἄθλια.

ΙΩΝ

τί χρῆμα δράσασ᾽, εἰ θεῷ συνεζύγη;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὸν παῖδ᾽ ὃν ἔτεκεν ἐξέθηκε δωμάτων.

ΙΩΝ

ὁ δ᾽ ἐκτεθεὶς παῖς ποῦ ᾽στιν; εἰσορᾷ φάος;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκ οἶδεν οὐδείς. ταῦτα καὶ μαντεύομαι.

ΙΩΝ

εἰ δ᾽ οὐκέτ᾽ ἔστι, τίνι τρόπῳ διεφθάρη;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

θῆρας σφε τὸν δύστηνον ἐλπίζει κτανεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

ποίῳ τόδ᾽ ἔγνω χρωμένη τεκμηρίῳ;

ION

Speak it: myself will undertake for thee.

CREUSA

Hear then the story:—but ashamed am I.

ION

Shame shall not help thy strait,—a deedless Goddess!

CREUSA

She saith—my friend—that Phoebus humbled her.

ION

Phoebus!—a woman! Stranger, say not so.

CREUSA

She bare the God's child, and her sire knew naught.

ION

Never!—a man's crime this, and hers the shame.

CREUSA

No!—herself saith. She hath suffered griefs beside.

ION

Suffered?—for what sin wrought—this bride of heaven?

CREUSA

The son she bare she cast forth from her halls.

ION

Where is her cast-out child? Doth he see light?

CREUSA

None knows. For this I seek the oracle.

ION

But, if he be no more, how perished he?

CREUSA

Wild beasts, she troweth, slew the hapless babe.

ION

And by what token knew she this had been?

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐλθοῦσ' ἵν' αὐτὸν ἐξέθησ', οὐχ ηὗρ' ἔτι.

ΙΩΝ

ἦν δὲ σταλαγμὸς ἐν στίβῳ τις αἵματος;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὔ φησι· καίτοι πόλλ' ἐπεστράφη πέδον.

ΙΩΝ

χρόνος δὲ τίς τῷ παιδὶ διαπεπραγμένῳ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σοὶ ταὐτὸν ἥβης, εἴπερ ἦν, εἶχ' ἂν μέτρον.

ΙΩΝ

οὔκουν ἔτ' ἄλλον ὕστερον τίκτει γόνον;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀδικεῖ νιν ὁ θεός· οὐ τεκοῦσα δ' ἀθλία.

ΙΩΝ

τί δ', εἰ λάθρᾳ νιν Φοῖβος ἐκτρέφει λαβών;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὰ κοινὰ χαίρων οὐ δίκαια δρᾷ μόνος.

ΙΩΝ

οἴμοι· προσῳδὸς ἡ τύχη τὠμῷ πάθει.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ σ', ὦ ξέν', οἶμαι μητέρ' ἀθλίαν ποθεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ μή γ' ἐπ' οἶκτόν μ' ἔξαγ' οὗ 'λελήσμεθα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σιγῶ· πέραινε δ' ὧν σ' ἀνιστορῶ πέρι.

ΙΩΝ

οἶσθ' οὖν ὃ κάμνει τοῦ λόγου μάλιστά σοι;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί δ' οὐκ ἐκείνῃ τῇ ταλαιπώρῳ νοσεῖ;

ΙΩΝ

πῶς ὁ θεὸς ὃ λαθεῖν βούλεται μαντεύσεται;

CREUSA

She came where she had left him, and found not.

ION

And blood-gouts—were there any on the track?

CREUSA

Nay, saith she: yet she traversed oft the ground.

ION

How long the time since this child's taking-off?

CREUSA

Living, he had had the measure of thy years.

ION

And hath she borne no offspring after this?

CREUSA

Still the God wrongs her: childless grief is hers.

ION

What if in secret Phoebus fostereth him?

CREUSA

Unjust!—alone to enjoy what he should share.

ION

Ah me! her heart-strings are attuned to mine!

CREUSA

For thee yearns some sad mother too, I ween.

ION

Ah, wake not thou mine half-forgotten grief.

CREUSA

I am dumb: whereof I question thee, say on.

ION

Seest thou where lies the weakness of thy plea?

CREUSA

Ah, hapless one, wherein is she not weak!

ION

How should the God reveal that he would hide?

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἴπερ καθίζει τρίποδα κοινὸν Ἑλλάδος.

ΙΩΝ

αἰσχύνεται τὸ πρᾶγμα· μὴ 'ξέλεγχέ νιν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀλγύνεται δέ γ' ἡ παθοῦσα τῇ τύχῃ.

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις σοι προφητεύσει τάδε.
ἐν τοῖς γὰρ αὐτοῦ δώμασιν κακὸς φανεὶς
Φοῖβος δικαίως τὸν θεμιστεύοντά σοι
δράσειεν ἄν τι πῆμ'· ἀπαλλάσσου, γύναι·
τῷ γὰρ θεῷ τἀναντί' οὐ μαντευτέον.
εἰς γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἀμαθίας ἔλθοιμεν ἄν,
εἰ τοὺς θεοὺς ἄκοντας ἐκπονήσομεν
φράζειν ἃ μὴ θέλουσιν ἢ προβωμίοις
σφαγαῖσι μήλων ἢ δι' οἰωνῶν πτεροῖς.
ἂν γὰρ βίᾳ σπεύδωμεν ἀκόντων θεῶν,
ἀνόνητα[1] κεκτήμεσθα τἀγάθ', ὦ γύναι·
ἃ δ' ἂν διδῶσ' ἑκόντες, ὠφελούμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλαί γε πολλοῖς εἰσι συμφοραὶ βροτῶν,
μορφαὶ δὲ διαφέρουσιν. ἓν δ' ἂν εὐτυχὲς
μόλις ποτ' ἐξεύροι τις ἀνθρώπων βίῳ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ Φοῖβε, κἀκεῖ κἀνθάδ' οὐ δίκαιος εἶ
εἰς τὴν ἀποῦσαν, ἧς πάρεισιν οἱ λόγοι.
σὺ δ' οὔτ' ἔσωσας τὸν σὸν ὃν σῶσαί σ' ἐχρῆν,
οὔθ' ἱστορούσῃ μητρὶ μάντις ὢν ἐρεῖς,
ὡς εἰ μὲν οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὀγκωθῇ τάφῳ,
εἰ δ' ἔστιν, ἔλθῃ μητρὸς εἰς ὄψιν ποτέ.

[1] Stephens: for MSS. ἄκοντα.

CREUSA

How not?—his is the nation's oracle.

ION

His shame the deed is. Question not of him.

CREUSA

O yea, the sufferer in her lot may pine!

ION

There's none will ask the God of this for thee.
For, in his own halls were he villain proved,
Vengeance on him who brought thee that response
Would Phoebus justly wreak. Ah lady, go:
We must not seek his shrine to flout the God.
For lo, what height of folly should we reach
If in the Gods' despite we wrest their will,
By sacrifice of sheep on altars, or
By flight of birds, to tell what they would veil.
Could we of force wring aught from Gods full loth,
Profitless blessings, lady, should we grasp;
But what they give free-willed are boons indeed.

CHORUS

Strange chances many on many mortals fall,
And manifold their forms. Ye scarce shall find
One happy lot in all the life of men.

CREUSA

O Phoebus, there and here unjust art thou
Unto the absent one whose plea is here.
Thou shouldst have saved thine own, yet didst not
save;
Nor heeds the Seer the mother's questioning,
That, if her babe live not, his tomb may rise,
Or, if he live, that she may see his face.

ἄλλ' οὖν, ἐᾶν γὰρ χρὴ[1] τάδ', εἰ πρὸς τοῦ θεοῦ
κωλυόμεσθα μὴ μαθεῖν ἃ βούλομαι.
ἀλλ', ὦ ξέν', εἰσορῶ γὰρ εὐγενῆ πόσιν
Ξοῦθον πέλας δὴ τόνδε, τὰς Τροφωνίου
λιπόντα θαλάμας, τοὺς λελεγμένους λόγους
σίγα πρὸς ἄνδρα, μή τιν' αἰσχύνην λάβω
διακονοῦσα κρυπτά, καὶ προβῇ λόγος
οὐχ ᾗπερ ἡμεῖς αὐτὸν ἐξειλίσσομεν.
τὰ γὰρ γυναικῶν δυσχερῆ πρὸς ἄρσενας,
κἀν ταῖς κακαῖσιν ἀγαθαὶ μεμιγμέναι
μισούμεθ'· οὕτω δυστυχεῖς πεφύκαμεν.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ὁ θεὸς τῶν ἐμῶν προσφθεγμάτων
λαβὼν ἀπαρχὰς χαιρέτω, σύ τ', ὦ γύναι.
μῶν χρόνιος ἐλθών σ' ἐξέπληξ' ὀρρωδίᾳ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐδέν γ'· ἀφίκου δ' εἰς μέριμναν. ἀλλά μοι
λέξον, τί θέσπισμ' ἐκ Τροφωνίου φέρεις,
παίδων ὅπως νῷν σπέρμα συγκραθήσεται;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐκ ἠξίωσε τοῦ θεοῦ προλαμβάνειν
μαντεύμαθ'. ἓν δ' οὖν εἶπεν· οὐκ ἄπαιδά με
πρὸς οἶκον ἥξειν οὐδὲ σ' ἐκ χρηστηρίων.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ πότνια Φοίβου μῆτερ, εἰ γὰρ αἰσίως
ἔλθοιμεν, ἅ τε νῷν συμβόλαια πρόσθεν ἦν
ἐς παῖδα τὸν σόν, μεταπέσοι βελτίονα.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ἔσται τάδ'· ἀλλὰ τίς προφητεύει θεοῦ;

[1] Reiske: for MSS. ἀλλ' ἐὰν χρῇ.

Yet must I let this be, if by the God
I am barred from learning that which I desire.
But, stranger,—for I see my princely lord,
Xuthus, anigh us yonder, who hath left
Trophonius' crypt,—of this that we have said
Speak to my lord naught, lest I get me shame
For handling secrets, and the tale fall out
Not after our unravelling thereof.
For woman's lot as touching men is hard;
And, since the good are with the bad confused,
Hated we are:—ill-starred we are from birth.

Enter XUTHUS.

XUTHUS

First, to the God the firstfruits of my greetings:
All hail to him, and hail to thee, my wife.
Hath my late-lingering thrilled thee with dismay?

CREUSA

Nay, 'tis but care that meets thee. Tell to me
What answer from Trophonius bringest thou,
How we shall have joint issue, thou and I?

XUTHUS

He took not on him to forestall the word
Of Phoebus. This he said—nor thou nor I
Childless shall wend home from the oracle.

CREUSA

Queen, Phoebus' mother, grant our home-return
Prosperous: all our dealings heretofore
Touching thy son, to happier issue fall!

XUTHUS

This shall be. Who is His interpreter?

ΙΩΝ

ἡμεῖς τά γ' ἔξω, τῶν ἔσω δ' ἄλλοις μέλει,
οἳ πλησίον θάσσουσι τρίποδος, ὦ ξένε,
Δελφῶν ἀριστῆς, οὓς ἐκλήρωσεν πάλος.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

καλῶς· ἔχω δὴ πάνθ' ὅσων ἐχρῄζομεν.
στείχοιμ' ἂν εἴσω· καὶ γάρ, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω,
χρηστήριον πέπτωκε τοῖς ἐπήλυσι
κοινὸν πρὸ ναοῦ· βούλομαι δ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
τῇδ', αἰσία γάρ, θεοῦ λαβεῖν μαντεύματα.
σὺ δ' ἀμφὶ βωμούς, ὦ γύναι, δαφνηφόρους
λαβοῦσα κλῶνας, εὐτέκνους εὔχου θεοῖς
χρησμούς μ' ἐνεγκεῖν ἐξ Ἀπόλλωνος δόμων.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔσται τάδ', ἔσται. Λοξίας δ' ἐὰν θέλῃ
νῦν ἀλλὰ τὰς πρὶν ἀναλαβεῖν ἁμαρτίας,
ἅπας μὲν οὐ γένοιτ' ἂν εἰς ἡμᾶς φίλος,
ὅσον δὲ χρῄζει, θεὸς γάρ ἐστι, δέξομαι.

ΙΩΝ

τί ποτε λόγοισιν ἡ ξένη πρὸς τὸν θεὸν
κρυπτοῖσιν ἀεὶ λοιδοροῦσ' αἰνίσσεται,
ἤτοι φιλοῦσά γ' ἧς ὑπερμαντεύεται,
ἢ καί τι σιγῶσ' ὧν σιωπᾶσθαι χρεών;
ἀτὰρ θυγατρὸς τῆς Ἐρεχθέως τί μοι
μέλει; προσήκει γ' οὐδέν. ἀλλὰ χρυσέαις
πρόχοισιν ἐλθὼν εἰς ἀπορραντήρια
δρόσον καθήσω. νουθετητέος δέ μοι
Φοῖβος, τί πάσχει· παρθένους βίᾳ γαμῶν
προδίδωσι, παῖδας ἐκτεκνούμενος λάθρᾳ
θνῄσκοντας ἀμελεῖ. μὴ σύ γ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ κρατεῖς,
ἀρετὰς δίωκε. καὶ γὰρ ὅστις ἂν βροτῶν
κακὸς πεφύκῃ, ζημιοῦσιν οἱ θεοί.

ION

Without, I; others for the things within,
Stranger, which nigh unto the tripod sit,
The Delphian lords, in order of their lot.

XUTHUS

'Tis well: now know I all I sought to know.
I will pass in; for, as I hear it told,
Before the temple hath been slain for strangers
A general victim. I would fain this day—
This day fair-omened—gain the God's response.
Thou to the bay-crowned altars bear the boughs,
My wife, and pray the Gods that I may win
Promise of fair sons from Apollo's fane.

CREUSA

Yea, this shall be. [*Exit* XUTHUS *to inner Temple.*
If Loxias consent
Now at the last to atone for olden wrongs,
Not wholly will he show himself my friend,
Yet, since he is God, whate'er he grants I take.
[*Exit.*

ION

Why doth this stranger rail upon the God
In riddles of dark sayings evermore?
For love of her for whom she seeks the shrine?
Or keeping back a thing she must not speak?
Yet with Erechtheus' daughter what have I
To do? She is naught to me. But I will go
Unto the lavers, with the golden ewers
To pour in water-dews. Yet must I plead
With Phoebus—what ails him? He ravisheth
Maids, and forsakes; begetteth babes by stealth,
And heeds not, though they die. Do thou not so!
Being strong, be righteous. For what man soe'er
Transgresseth, the Gods visit this on him.

πῶς οὖν δίκαιον τοὺς νόμους ὑμᾶς βροτοῖς
γράψαντας αὐτοὺς ἀνομίαν ὀφλισκάνειν;
εἰ δ'—οὐ γὰρ ἔσται, τῷ λόγῳ δὲ χρήσομαι—
δίκας βιαίων δώσετ' ἀνθρώποις γάμων,
σὺ καὶ Ποσειδῶν Ζεύς θ' ὃς οὐρανοῦ κρατεῖ,
ναοὺς τίνοντες ἀδικίας κενώσετε.
τὰς ἡδονὰς γὰρ τῆς προμηθίας πάρος
σπεύδοντες ἀδικεῖτ'. οὐκέτ' ἀνθρώπους κακοὺς
λέγειν δίκαιον, εἰ τὰ τῶν θεῶν καλὰ
μιμούμεθ', ἀλλὰ τοὺς διδάσκοντας τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὲ τὰν ὠδίνων λοχιᾶν στρ.
ἀνειλείθυιαν, ἐμὰν
Ἀθάναν ἱκετεύω,
Προμηθεῖ Τιτᾶνι λοχευ-
θεῖσαν κατ' ἀκροτάτας
κορυφᾶς Διός, ὦ μάκαιρα Νίκα,
μόλε Πύθιον οἶκον,
Ὀλύμπου χρυσέων θαλάμων
πταμένα πρὸς ἀγυιάς,
Φοιβήιος ἔνθα γᾶς
μεσσόμφαλος ἑστία
παρὰ χορευομένῳ τρίποδι
μαντεύματα κραίνει,
σὺ καὶ παῖς ἁ Λατογενής,
δύο θεαὶ δύο παρθένοι,
κασίγνηται σεμναὶ τοῦ Φοίβου.
ἱκετεύσατε δ', ὦ κόραι,
τὸ παλαιὸν Ἐρεχθέως

How were it just then that ye should enact
For men laws, and yourselves work lawlessness?
For if—it could not be, yet put it so—
Ye should pay mulct to men for lawless lust,[1]
Thou, the Sea-king, and Zeus the Lord of Heaven,
Paying for wrongs should make your temples void.
For, following pleasure past all wisdom's bounds,
Ye work unrighteousness. Unjust it were
To call men vile, if we but imitate
What Gods deem good:—they are vile who teach us this. [*Exit.*

CHORUS

My Queen, at whose birth-tide was given (*Str.*)
Of the Lady of Travail-pang
No help, hear, Pallas, my prayer,
Whom the crown of a God's head bare
By Prometheus the Titan riven
When the Daughter of Zeus forth sprang;

Come, Victory-queen, to the dwelling
Pythian, speeding thy wing
From Olympus' chambers of gold
To the streets that the World's Heart hold,
Where the bodings of Phoebus are told,—
Yea, brought to pass in the telling,—
At the tripod that dances enring.

Draw nigh at mine invocation,
Thou and Artemis, Virgins twain,
Phoebus's sisters divine,
Join your intercessions with mine,
That Erechtheus' ancient line

[1] The fine for violence to a virgin was, by Solon's laws, a thousand drachmas.

γένος εὐτεκνίας χρονίου καθαροῖς
μαντεύμασι κῦρσαι.

ὑπερβαλλούσας γὰρ ἔχει ἀντ.
θνατοῖς εὐδαιμονίας
ἀκίνητον ἀφορμάν,
τέκνων οἷς ἂν καρποτρόφοι
λάμπωσιν ἐν θαλάμοις
πατρίοισι νεάνιδες ἧβαι,
διαδέκτορα πλοῦτον
ὡς ἕξοντες ἐκ πατέρων
ἑτέροις ἐπὶ τέκνοις.
ἀλκά τε γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς
σύν τ' εὐτυχίαις φίλον,
δορί τε γᾷ πατρίᾳ φέρει
σωτήριον αἴγλαν.[1]
ἐμοὶ μὲν πλούτου τε πάρος
βασιλικῶν τ' εἶεν θαλάμων
τροφαὶ κήδειοι κεδνῶν γε τέκνων.
τὸν ἄπαιδα δ' ἀποστυγῶ
βίον, ᾧ τε δοκεῖ ψέγω·
μετὰ δὲ κτεάνων μετρίων βιοτᾶς
εὔπαιδος ἐχοίμαν.

ὦ Πανὸς θακήματα καὶ ἐπῳδ.
παραυλίζουσα πέτρα
μυχώδεσι Μακραῖς,
ἵνα χοροὺς στείβουσι ποδοῖν
Ἀγραύλου κόραι τρίγονοι
στάδια χλοερὰ πρὸ Παλλάδος

[1] Herwerden: for MSS. ἀλκάν.

Through the light of a clear revelation
  Fair offspring at last may attain.

'Tis a treasure whose seals are unbroken, (*Ant.*)
  'Tis a joy that surpasseth the lot
    Of the many, when stalwart and tall
    Shines fair in a father's hall
The presence of sons, to betoken
  A line that shall perish not;

Sons, that, when death bringeth severance,
  Shall receive to pass on to their seed
    The wealth that their sires' hands hold:
    Yea, by these be our sorrows consoled,
    And a joy within joy they enfold,
And their spear flasheth light of deliverance
  In the hour of the fatherland's need.

Ah, far above golden treasure
  Or than princely halls do I praise
    Dear children to cherish—mine own!
    Mine horror were life all lone:
    Who loveth it, wit hath he none:
But give to me substance in measure,
  And children to brighten my days!

  O haunts of Pan's abiding, (*Epode*)
    O sentinel rock down-gazing
      On the Long-cliff caves dim-glimmering,
Where, with shadowy feet in the dance soft-sliding,
  Agraulus' daughters three go pacing
    O'er the lawns by Athena's fane dew-shimmering

ναῶν, συρίγγων
ὑπ᾽ αἰόλας ἰαχᾶς
ὕμνων, ὅτ᾽ ἀναλίοις
συρίζεις, ὦ Πάν,
τοῖσι σοῖς ἐν ἄντροις,
ἵνα τεκοῦσά τις
παρθένος, ὦ μελέα, βρέφος
Φοίβῳ, πτανοῖς ἐξώρισε θοίναν
θηρσί τε φοινίαν δαῖτα, πικρῶν γάμων
ὕβριν. οὔτ᾽ ἐπὶ κερκίσιν οὔτε λόγοις
φάτιν ἄιον εὐτυχίας μετέχειν
θεόθεν τέκνα θνατοῖς.

ΙΩΝ

πρόσπολοι γυναῖκες, αἳ τῶνδ᾽ ἀμφὶ κρηπῖδας δόμων
θυοδόκων φρούρημ᾽ ἔχουσαι δεσπότην φυλάσσετε,
ἐκλέλοιπ᾽ ἤδη τὸν ἱερὸν τρίποδα καὶ χρηστήριον
Ξοῦθος, ἢ μίμνει κατ᾽ οἶκον ἱστορῶν ἀπαιδίαν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐν δόμοις ἔστ᾽, ὦ ξέν᾽· οὔπω δῶμ᾽ ὑπερβαίνει τόδε.
ὡς δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἐξόδοισιν ὄντος τῶνδ᾽ ἀκούομεν πυλῶν
δοῦπον, ἐξιόντα τ᾽ ἤδη δεσπότην ὁρᾶν πάρα.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, χαῖρ᾽· ἡ γὰρ ἀρχὴ τοῦ λόγου πρέπουσά μοι.

ΙΩΝ

χαίρομεν· σὺ δ᾽ εὖ φρόνει γε, καὶ δύ᾽ ὄντ᾽ εὖ πράξομεν.

In moonlight, while upward floats
A weird strain rising and falling,
Wild witchery-wafting notes,
O Pan, from thy pipes that are calling
Out of thy sunless grots![1]
Ah, a maid-mother there most woe-forlorn
Cast Phoebus's child for a banquet gory—
Bitter outrage's fruit!—by the birds to be torn
And the beasts. Nor in woven web nor in story
Ever heard I of happiness blent with the glory
Of Gods' seed woman-born.

Enter ION.

ION

Bower-maidens, ye which keeping watch the altar-
steps beside [forth abide,
Of the incense-clouded fane, your master's coming-
Say, hath Xuthus left by this the holy tripod and
the shrine, [childless line?
Or within yet lingering asks he touching that long-

CHORUS

In the temple is he, stranger, treads not yet the
threshold-stone.
List, a sound at yonder portal—through the porch-
way passeth one:— [for eyes to see.
Lo, where now he cometh forth—our master, plain

Enter XUTHUS: *attempts to embrace* ION.

XUTHUS

Joy to thee, son!—fitting prelude this is of my
speech to thee.

ION

Joy is mine: but thou, control thee; then were twain
in happy case.

[1] The daughters of Agraulus (cf. ll. 22–24, 271–4) haunted after death the scene of their suicide.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

δὸς χερὸς φίλημά μοι σῆς σώματός τ' ἀμφιπτυχάς.

ΙΩΝ

εὖ φρονεῖς μέν ; ἤ σ' ἔμηνε θεοῦ τις, ὦ ξένε, βλάβη ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

σωφρονῶ, τὰ φίλταθ' εὑρὼν εἰ φιλεῖν ἐφίεμαι.

ΙΩΝ

παῦε· μὴ ψαύσας τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ στέμματα ῥήξῃς χερί.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ἅψομαι· κοὐ ῥυσιάζω, τἀμὰ δ' εὑρίσκω φίλα.

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ ἀπαλλάξει, πρὶν εἴσω τόξα πλευμόνων λαβεῖν ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὡς τί δὴ φεύγεις με σαυτοῦ γνωρίσας τὰ φίλτατα ;

ΙΩΝ

οὐ φιλῶ φρενοῦν ἀμούσους καὶ μεμηνότας ξένους.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

κτεῖνε καὶ πίμπρη· πατρὸς γάρ, ἢν κτάνῃς, ἔσει φονεύς.

ΙΩΝ

ποῦ δέ μοι πατὴρ σύ ; ταῦτ' οὖν οὐ γέλως κλύειν ἐμοί ;

XUTHUS

Let me kiss thine hand, and let me fold thy form in mine embrace!

ION

Stranger, hast thy wits?—or is thy mind distraught by stroke of heaven?

XUTHUS

Right my wit is, if I long to kiss my best-beloved regiven.

ION

Hold—hands off!—the temple-garlands of Apollo rend not thou!

XUTHUS

Clasp thee will I!—no man-stealer; but I find my darling now.

ION (*starting back, and fitting an arrow to his bow*).

Wilt not hence, or ever thou receive my shaft thy ribs within?

XUTHUS

Wherefore dost thou flee me, who hast learnt to know thy nearest kin?

ION

Naught I love to admonish aliens mannerless and sense-bereft.

XUTHUS

Slay—then burn me;[1] for a father's heart thine arrow shall have cleft.

ION

Thou my father! Is not this a laughter-scoff for me to hear?

[1] It being the sacred duty of the son to lay the father's corpse upon the pyre.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὔ· τρέχων ὁ μῦθος ἄν σοι τἀμὰ σημήνειεν ἄν.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ τί μοι λέξεις ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

πατὴρ σός εἰμι καὶ σὺ παῖς ἐμός.

ΙΩΝ

τίς λέγει τάδ᾽ ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὅς σ᾽ ἔθρεψεν ὄντα Λοξίας ἐμόν.

ΙΩΝ

μαρτυρεῖς σαυτῷ.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ γ᾽ ἐκμαθὼν χρηστηρια.

ΙΩΝ

ἐσφάλης αἴνιγμ᾽ ἀκούσας.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐκ ἄρ᾽ ὄρθ᾽ ἀκούομεν.

ΙΩΝ

ὁ δὲ λόγος τίς ἐστι Φοίβου ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

τὸν συναντήσαντά μοι—

ΙΩΝ

τίνα συνάντησιν ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

δόμων τῶνδ᾽ ἐξιόντι τοῦ θεοῦ—

ΙΩΝ

συμφορᾶς τίνος κυρῆσαι ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

παῖδ᾽ ἐμὸν πεφυκέναι.

ΙΩΝ

σὸν γεγῶτ᾽, ἢ δῶρον ἄλλων ;

XUTHUS

Nay, the eager-hurrying word shall show thee all my meaning clear.

ION

Ay, and what wilt tell?

XUTHUS

Thy father am I, and thou art my son.

ION

Who the voucher?

XUTHUS

Loxias, who reared the child that I have won.

ION

Thou art thine own witness.

XUTHUS

Nay, the God's own oracle I heard.

ION.

Heardest riddles and misreadest.

XUTHUS

Then mine ears can hear no word.

ION

What was this, the word of Phoebus?

XUTHUS

That the man who met my face—

ION

Met thee—met thee?

XUTHUS

As I came from out Apollo's holy place—

ION

Ay, and what should be his fate?

XUTHUS

My true-begotten son is this.

ION

Born thy son, or given of others?

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

δῶρον, ὄντα δ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ.

ΙΩΝ

πρῶτα δῆτ' ἐμοὶ ξυνάπτεις πόδα σόν ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐκ ἄλλῳ, τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

ἡ τύχη πόθεν ποθ' ἥκει ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

δύο μίαν θαυμάζομεν.

ΙΩΝ

ἔα. τίνος δέ σοι πεφυκα μητρός ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.

ΙΩΝ

οὐδὲ Φοῖβος εἶπε ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

τερφθεὶς τοῦτο, κεῖν' οὐκ ἠρόμην.

ΙΩΝ

γῆς ἄρ' ἐκπέφυκα μητρός ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐ πέδον τίκτει τέκνα.

ΙΩΝ

πῶς ἂν οὖν εἴην σός ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ', ἀναφέρω δ' εἰς τὸν θεόν.

ΙΩΝ

φέρε λόγων ἁψώμεθ' ἄλλων.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ταῦτ' ἄμεινον, ὦ τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

ἦλθες εἰς νόθον τι λέκτρον ;

XUTHUS

Given—and born from me he is.

ION

So on me thy foot first stumbled?

XUTHUS

Yea, my son, on none beside.

ION

Ay, and whence this happy chance?

XUTHUS

We marvel both it should betide.

ION

Ha, what mother bare me to thee?

XUTHUS

Sooth, thereof can I say naught.

ION

Neither Phoebus told?

XUTHUS

For joy of this thing, that I never sought.

ION

Ah, a child of mother Earth!

XUTHUS

Nay, children spring not from the sod.

ION

How then thine am I?

XUTHUS

I know not: I refer it to the God.

ION

Come, to reasonings rather turn we.

XUTHUS

Better so, my son, in sooth.

ION

Hadst thou ever part in lawless love?

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

μωρίᾳ γε τοῦ νέου.

ΙΩΝ

πρὶν κόρην λαβεῖν Ἐρεχθέως ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐ γὰρ ὕστερόν γέ πω.

ΙΩΝ

ἆρα δῆτ᾽ ἐκεῖ μ᾽ ἔφυσας ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

τῷ χρόνῳ γε συντρέχει.

ΙΩΝ

κᾆτα πῶς ἀφικόμεσθα δεῦρο,

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ταῦτ᾽ ἀμηχανῶ.

ΙΩΝ

διὰ μακρᾶς ἐλθὼν κελεύθου ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

τοῦτο κἄμ᾽ ἀπαιολᾷ.

ΙΩΝ

Πυθίαν δ᾽ ἦλθες πέτραν πρίν ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

εἰς φανάς γε Βακχίου.

ΙΩΝ

προξένων δ᾽ ἔν του κατέσχες ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὅς με Δελφίσιν κόραις —

ΙΩΝ

ἐθιάσευσ᾽, ἢ πῶς τάδ᾽ αὐδᾷς ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

Μαινάσιν γε Βακχίου.

ΙΩΝ

ἔμφρον᾽ ἢ κάτοινον ὄντα ;

XUTHUS

Mid follies of my youth.

ION

Ere Erechtheus' daughter wed thee?

XUTHUS

Since, to her have I been true.

ION

Haply then didst thou beget me?

XUTHUS

Time is consonant thereto.

ION

Were it so, how came I hither?

XUTHUS

Nay, I cannot fathom it.

ION

Long the journey for a babe!

XUTHUS

This too o'erpasseth all my wit.

ION

Hast thou seen ere this the Pythian Rock?

XUTHUS

At Bacchus' festal rite.

ION

Lodging with a Public Host?

XUTHUS

Yea; and with Delphian girls by night—

ION

Made initiate—this thy meaning?

XUTHUS

They were maidens Bacchanal.

ION

Sober, or of wine o'ercome?

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

Βακχίου πρὸς ἡδοναῖς.

ΙΩΝ

τοῦτ' ἐκεῖν' ἵν' ἐσπάρημεν.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὁ πότμος ἐξηῦρεν, τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

πῶς δ' ἀφικόμεσθα ναούς;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ἔκβολον κόρης ἴσως.

ΙΩΝ

ἐκπεφεύγαμεν τὸ δοῦλον.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

πατέρα νυν δέχου, τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

τῷ θεῷ γοῦν οὐκ ἀπιστεῖν εἰκός.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

εὖ φρονεῖς ἄρα.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ τί βουλόμεσθά γ' ἄλλο—

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

νῦν ὁρᾷς ἃ χρή σ' ὁρᾶν.

ΙΩΝ

ἢ Διὸς παιδὸς γενέσθαι παῖς;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὃ σοί γε γίγνεται.

ΙΩΝ

ἦ θίγω δῆθ' οἵ μ' ἔφυσαν;

XUTHUS

Of Bacchus' joys did this befall.

ION

This is my begetting's story!

XUTHUS

Fate, my son, hath found it out.

ION

Yet, how came I to the fane?

XUTHUS

The maiden cast thee forth, I doubt.

ION

So, I 'scape the taint of serfdom.[1]

XUTHUS

Son, thy father now receive.

ION

'Tis the God: I may not doubt him.

XUTHUS

Yea, 'tis wisdom to believe.

ION

What thing higher can I wish for—

XUTHUS

Now thou seest clear and true

ION

Than the fatherhood of Zeus?

XUTHUS

O yea, by birth is this thy due.[2]

ION

Shall I clasp him, my begetter?

[1] Only free-born Delphian women could take part in the "Orgies."

[2] Xuthus being descended from Zeus.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

πιθόμενός γε τῷ θεῷ.

ΙΩΝ

χαῖρέ μοι, πάτερ,

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

φίλον γε φθέγμ' ἐδεξάμην τόδε.

ΙΩΝ

ἡμέρα θ' ἡ νῦν παροῦσα.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

μακάριόν γ' ἔθηκέ με.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ φίλη μῆτερ, πότ' ἆρα καὶ σὸν ὄψομαι δέμας;
νῦν ποθῶ σε μᾶλλον ἢ πρὶν ἥτις εἶ ποτ' εἰσιδεῖν.
ἀλλ' ἴσως τέθνηκας, ἡμεῖς δ' οὐδὲν ἂν δυναίμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κοιναὶ μὲν ἡμῖν δωμάτων εὐπραξίαι·
ὅμως δὲ καὶ δέσποιναν εἰς τέκν' εὐτυχεῖν
ἐβουλόμην ἂν τούς τ' Ἐρεχθέως δόμους.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, εἰς μὲν σὴν ἀνεύρεσιν θεὸς
ὀρθῶς ἔκρανε, καὶ συνῆψ' ἐμοί τε σέ,
σύ τ' αὖ τὰ φίλταθ' ηὗρες οὐκ εἰδὼς πάρος.
ὃ δ' ἦξας ὀρθῶς, τοῦτο κἄμ' ἔχει πόθος,
ὅπως σύ τ', ὦ παῖ, μητέρ' εὑρήσεις σέθεν,
ἐγώ θ' ὁποίας μοι γυναικὸς ἐξέφυς.
χρόνῳ δὲ δόντες ταῦτ' ἴσως εὕροιμεν ἄν.
ἀλλ' ἐκλιπὼν θεοῦ δάπεδ' ἀλητείαν τε σὴν
εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας στεῖχε κοινόφρων πατρί,
οὗ σ' ὄλβιον μὲν σκῆπτρον ἀναμένει πατρός,
πολὺς δὲ πλοῦτος· οὐδὲ θάτερον νοσῶν
δυοῖν κεκλήσει δυσγενὴς πένης θ' ἅμα,
ἀλλ' εὐγενής τε καὶ πολυκτήμων βίου.

XUTHUS

If with Phoebus thou comply.

ION

Hail to thee, my father!

XUTHUS

Joyfully I welcome this thy cry.

ION

Hail the day that sees our meeting!

XUTHUS

Happy man it maketh me.

ION

Ah, belovèd mother, when thy visage also shall I see?
More than ever now I long to see thee, who thou be soe'er.
Ah, but thou perchance art dead, and all in vain [should be my prayer.

CHORUS

Ours too the house's happy fortune is:
Yet fain were I our queen were also blest
With offspring, and Erechtheus' ancient line.

XUTHUS

My son, as touching thy discovery
The God spake sooth, and so joined thee and me.
Thou hast found thy dearest, erst to thee unknown.
For thy just yearning, this is also mine,
That thou mayst find thy mother, O my son,
And I, the woman of whose womb thou art.
This shall we find forth haply, left to time.
Now, leave the God's floor, and thine homeless state:
To Athens come, with thine heart even as mine.
There waiteth thee thy father's sceptred bliss,
And much wealth. None shall cast into thy teeth
One of these taunts, base birth or poverty.
High-born art thou, a mighty man of wealth.

σιγᾷς; τί πρὸς γῆν ὄμμα σὸν βαλὼν ἔχεις
εἰς φροντίδας τ' ἀπῆλθες, ἐκ δὲ χαρμονῆς
πάλιν μεταστὰς δεῖμα προσβάλλεις πατρί;

ΙΩΝ

οὐ ταὐτὸν εἶδος φαίνεται τῶν πραγμάτων
πρόσωθεν ὄντων ἐγγύθεν θ' ὁρωμένων.
ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν μὲν συμφορὰν ἀσπάζομαι,
πατέρα σ' ἀνευρών· ὧν δὲ γιγνώσκω πέρι
ἄκουσον. εἶναί φασι τὰς αὐτόχθονας
κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας οὐκ ἐπείσακτον γένος,
ἵν' εἰσπεσοῦμαι δύο νόσω κεκτημένος,
πατρός τ' ἐπακτοῦ καὐτὸς ὢν νοθαγενής.
καὶ τοῦτ' ἔχων τοὔνειδος, ἀσθενὴς μὲν ὤν,
[ὁ μηδὲν ὢν κἀξ'][1] οὐδένων κεκλήσομαι·
ἢν δ' εἰς τὸ πρῶτον πόλεος ὁρμηθεὶς ζυγὸν
ζητῶ τις εἶναι, τῶν μὲν ἀδυνάτων ὕπο
μισησόμεσθα· λυπρὰ γὰρ τὰ κρείσσονα·
ὅσοι δὲ χρηστοὶ δυνάμενοί τ' εἶναι σοφοὶ
σιγῶσι κοὐ σπεύδουσιν εἰς τὰ πράγματα,
γέλωτ' ἐν αὐτοῖς μωρίαν τε λήψομαι
οὐχ ἡσυχάζων ἐν πόλει ψόγου πλέᾳ.
τῶν δ' αὖ δοκούντων[2] χρωμένων τε τῇ πόλει
εἰς ἀξίωμα βὰς πλέον φρουρήσομαι
ψήφοισιν· οὕτω γὰρ τάδ', ὦ πάτερ, φιλεῖ·
οἱ τὰς πόλεις ἔχοντες κἀξιώματα
τοῖς ἀνθαμίλλοις εἰσὶ πολεμιώτατοι.
ἐλθὼν δ' ἐς οἶκον ἀλλότριον ἔπηλυς ὢν
γυναῖκά θ' ὡς ἄτεκνον, ἣ κοινουμένη
τὰς συμφοράς σοι πρόσθεν, ἀπολαχοῦσα νῦν
αὐτὴ καθ' αὑτὴν τὴν τύχην οἴσει πικρῶς,

[1] Scaliger and Valckenaer: lacuna in MSS.
[2] Wecklein: for MSS. λογίων

Silent ?—Now wherefore earthward droops thine eye,
And thou art deep in thought, and from thy joy
Art changed, and strikest dread into thy sire ?

ION

The face of things appeareth not the same
Far off, and when we scan them nigh at hand.
So do I greet with gladness this my lot
Who find a sire : howbeit hear what burden
Weighs on my soul. The glorious earth-born state,
Athens, men say, hath naught of alien strain.
I shall thrust in, stained with a twofold taint—
An outland father, and my bastard self.
And, bearing this reproach, nor strong in friends,
" Nobody " shall be called—" Nobody's Son."
Then, if I press to Athens' highest ranks,
And seek a name, of dullards shall I win
Hatred ; for jealousy ever dogs success.
Good men, whose wisdom well could helm the state,
Who yet hang back, who never speak in public,
To them shall I be laughing-stock and fool,
Who, in a town censorious, go not softly.
And statesmen who have made their mark, mid whom
I seek repute, will hedge me in, and check
By the assembly's votes. 'Tis ever so ;
They which sway nations, and have won repute,
To young ambitions are the bitterest foes.

Then, coming to a strange house, alien I,
And to a childless lady, who hath shared
With thee her sorrow heretofore, but now
Shall bear in bitterness her reproach alone,

πῶς δ' οὐχ ὑπ' αὐτῆς εἰκότως μισήσομαι,
ὅταν παραστῶ σοὶ μὲν ἐγγύθεν ποδός,
ἡ δ' οὖσ' ἄτεκνος τὰ σὰ φίλ' εἰσορᾷ πικρῶς ;
κᾆτ' ἢ προδοὺς σύ μ' ἐς δάμαρτα σὴν βλέπῃς,
ἢ τἀμὰ τιμῶν δῶμα συγχέας ἔχῃς ;
ὅσας σφαγὰς δὴ φαρμάκων τε θανασίμων
γυναῖκες εὗρον ἀνδράσιν διαφθοράς.
ἄλλως τε τὴν σὴν ἄλοχον οἰκτείρω, πάτερ,
ἄπαιδα γηράσκουσαν· οὐ γὰρ ἀξία
πατέρων ἀπ' ἐσθλῶν οὖσ' ἀπαιδίᾳ νοσεῖν.
τυραννίδος δὲ τῆς μάτην αἰνουμένης
τὸ μὲν πρόσωπον ἡδύ, τἀν δόμοισι δὲ
λυπηρά· τίς γὰρ μακάριος, τίς εὐτυχής,
ὅστις δεδοικὼς καὶ παραβλέπων βίου
αἰῶνα τείνει ; δημότης ἂν εὐτυχὴς
ζῆν ἂν θέλοιμι μᾶλλον ἢ τύραννος ὤν,
ᾧ τοὺς πονηροὺς ἡδονὴ φίλους ἔχειν,
ἐσθλοὺς δὲ μισεῖ κατθανεῖν φοβούμενος.
εἴποις ἂν ὡς ὁ χρυσὸς ἐκνικᾷ τάδε,.
πλουτεῖν τε τερπνόν· οὐ φιλῶ ψόγους κλύειν
ἐν χερσὶ σῴζων ὄλβον οὐδ' ἔχειν πόνους·
εἴη δ' ἔμοιγε μέτρια μὴ λυπουμένῳ.
ἃ δ' ἐνθάδ' εἶχον ἀγάθ' ἄκουσόν μου, πάτερ·
τὴν φιλτάτην μὲν πρῶτον ἀνθρώποις σχολήν,
ὄχλον τε μέτριον, οὐδέ μ' ἐξέπληξ' ὁδοῦ
πονηρὸς οὐδείς· κεῖνο δ' οὐκ ἀνασχετόν,
εἴκειν ὁδοῦ χαλῶντα τοῖς κακίοσιν.
θεῶν δ' ἐν εὐχαῖς ἢ λόγοισιν ἦ βροτῶν,
ὑπηρετῶν χαίρουσιν, οὐ γοωμένοις.
καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐξέπεμπον, οἱ δ' ἧκον ξένοι,
ὥσθ' ἡδὺς ἀεὶ καινὸς ὢν καινοῖσιν ἦ.
ὃ δ' εὐκτὸν ἀνθρώποισι, κἂν ἄκουσιν ᾖ,

How shall I not, with reason, have her hate,
When by thy knee I stand, she on thy love
Looketh with bitter eyes of childlessness,—
When thou must cast me off and cleave to her,
Or honour me, and wreck thine household's peace?
How oft the dagger and the deadly bowl
Have women found to slay their lords withal!
Nay, father, more—I pity this thy wife
Who grows grey childless. 'Tis not worthy her,
Sprung from proud sires—this curse of childlessness.

And sovranty, so oft, so falsely praised,
Winsome its face is, but behind the veil
Is torment. Who is happy, fortunate who,
That, fearing violence, glancing aye askance,
Weareth out life? Nay, rather would I live
Happy-obscure, than be exalted prince,—
One who must joy to have for friends the vile,
Who hates the good, and ever dreads to die.
"Ah," thou wilt say, "gold overbears all this,
And wealth is sweet." Would I clutch lucre—groan
Under its load, with curses in mine ears?
Nay, wealth for me in measure, sorrowless.

But, father, hear what blessings here were mine:—
First, leisure, dearest of delights to men:
Friendly the folk; no villain jostleth me
Out of the path: it galls the very soul
To yield the pass, and vail to baser men.
My life was prayer to Gods, converse with men,
Ministrant unto joy and not to grief,
Welcoming coming, speeding parting guests,
A new face smiling still on faces new.
And that which men, though loth, must ask in prayer,

δίκαιον εἶναί μ' ὁ νόμος ἡ φύσις θ' ἅμα
παρεῖχε τῷ θεῷ. ταῦτα συννοούμενος
κρείσσω νομίζω τἀνθάδ' ἢ τἀκεῖ, πάτερ.
ἔα δ' ἐμαυτῷ ζῆν· ἴση γὰρ ἡ χάρις,
μεγάλοισι χαίρειν σμικρά θ' ἡδέως ἔχειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας, εἴπερ οὓς ἐγὼ φιλῶ
ἐν τοῖσι σοῖσιν εὐτυχήσουσιν λόγοις.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

παῦσαι λόγων τῶνδ', εὐτυχεῖν δ' ἐπίστασο·
θέλω γὰρ οὗπέρ σ' ηὗρον ἄρξασθαι, τέκνον,
κοινῆς τραπέζης δαῖτα πρὸς κοινὴν πεσών,
θῦσαί θ' ἅ σου πρὶν γενέθλι' οὐκ ἐθύσαμεν.
καὶ νῦν μὲν ὡς δὴ ξένον ἄγων σ' ἐφέστιον
δείπνοισι τέρψω· τῆς δ' Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς
ἄξω θεατὴν δῆθεν, ὡς οὐκ ὄντ' ἐμόν.
καὶ γὰρ γυναῖκα τὴν ἐμὴν οὐ βούλομαι
λυπεῖν ἄτεκνον οὖσαν αὐτὸς εὐτυχῶν.
χρόνῳ δὲ καιρὸν λαμβάνων προσάξομαι
δάμαρτ' ἐᾶν σε σκῆπτρα τἄμ' ἔχειν χθονός.
Ἴωνα δ' ὀνομάζω σε τῇ τύχῃ πρέπον,
ὁθούνεκ' ἀδύτων ἐξιόντι μοι θεοῦ
ἴχνος συνῆψας πρῶτος. ἀλλὰ τῶν φίλων
πλήρωμ' ἀθροίσας βουθύτῳ σὺν ἡδονῇ
πρόσειπε, μέλλων Δελφίδ' ἐκλιπεῖν πόλιν.
ὑμῖν δὲ σιγᾶν, δμωίδες, λέγω τάδε,
ἢ θάνατον εἰπούσαισι πρὸς δάμαρτ' ἐμήν.

ΙΩΝ

στείχοιμ' ἄν· ἓν δὲ τῆς τύχης ἄπεστί μοι·
εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἥτις μ' ἔτεκεν εὑρήσω, πάτερ,
ἀβίωτον ἡμῖν· εἰ δ' ἐπεύξασθαι χρεών,

Uprightness, use and nature bred in me
For Phoebus' service. Thinking on all this,
Father, I more esteem things here than there.
Mine own life let me live. Content with little
Hath charm no less than joy in great estate.

CHORUS

Well hast thou said, so be that those I love
In these thy words may find their happiness.

XUTHUS

Of this no more: but learn to bear thy fortune.
For, where I found thee, there would I begin,
By making thee a solemn public feast,
And thy birth-sacrifice, not offered yet.
Now to the feast as my guest bringing thee,
I'll make thee cheer: then to the Athenians' land
Bring thee as one that travelleth, not as mine.
For, sooth, I have no heart to vex my wife
With mine own bliss, while she is childless still.
And I shall find a time to bring my queen
To suffer thee to take my sceptred sway.

Ion[1] I name thee, of that happy chance
In that, as forth Apollo's shrine I came,
First lighted I on thee. Now all thy friends
To this glad feast of sacrifice gather thou,
To bid, as leaving Delphi soon, farewell.
You, handmaids, I command, speak not hereof.
Death—if ye say to my wife anything!

ION

I go: yet to my fortune one things lacks:
For, save I find her who gave life to me,
My life is naught. If one prayer be vouchsafed,

[1] Ἴων, "coming," because met at his *coming forth*.

ἐκ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν μ' ἡ τεκοῦσ' εἴη γυνή,
ὥς μοι γένηται μητρόθεν παρρησία.
καθαρὰν γὰρ ἤν τις εἰς πόλιν πέσῃ ξένος,
κἂν τοῖς λόγοισιν ἀστὸς ᾖ, τό γε στόμα
δοῦλον πέπαται κοὐκ ἔχει παρρησίαν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁρῶ δάκρυα καὶ πενθίμους στρ.
ἀλαλαγὰς στεναγμάτων τ' εἰσβολάς,
ὅταν ἐμὰ τύραννος εὐπαιδίαν
πόσιν ἔχοντ' εἰδῇ,
αὐτὴ δ' ἄπαις ᾖ καὶ λελειμμένη τέκνων.
τίν', ὦ παῖ πρόμαντι Λατοῦς ἔχρη-
σας ὑμνῳδίαν;
πόθεν ὁ παῖς ὅδ' ἀμφὶ ναοὺς σέθεν
τρόφιμος ἐξέβα, γυναικῶν τίνος;
οὐ γάρ με σαίνει
θέσφατα, μή τιν' ἔχῃ δόλον.
δειμαίνω συμφορὰν
ἐφ' ὅ ποτε βάσεται.
ἄτοπος ἄτοπα γὰρ παραδίδωσί μοι
τάδε θεοῦ φήμα.
ἔχει δόλον τύχαν θ' ὁ παῖς
ἄλλων τραφεὶς ἐξ αἱμάτων.
τίς οὐ τάδε ξυνοίσεται;

φίλαι, πότερ' ἐμᾷ δεσποίνᾳ ἀντ.
τάδε τορῶς ἐς οὖς γεγωνήσομεν,
πόσιν, ἐν ᾧ τὰ πάντ' ἔχουσ' ἐλπίδων
μέτοχος ἦν τλάμων;
νῦν δ' ἡ μὲν ἔρρει συμφοραῖς, ὁ δ' εὐτυχεῖ,
πολιὸν εἰσπεσοῦσα γῆρας, πόσις δ'

Of Athens' daughters may my mother be,
That by my mother may free speech be mine.
The alien who entereth a burg
Of pure blood, burgher though he be in name,
Hath not free speech ; he bears a bondman's tongue.
[*Exeunt* XUTHUS *and* ION.

CHORUS

O vision of tears, and of fierce heart-burning (*Str.*)
Breaking forth into shrieks and the onrush of sighing,
When my lady beholdeth her chieftain returning
In glory of fatherhood—knoweth that yearning
Of childlessness waiteth her, hunger undying !
Seer-son of Latona, what strain hast thou chanted ?
Whence came he, the waif in thy temple-porch lying ?
Thy fosterling—yea, but a mother yet wanted !
And the oracle stirreth mine heart to defying
Of its tones with the whisper of treachery haunted.
I fear whereunto it will grow,
This fate thou hast caused us to know :
Too strange for my credence it is.
Child fathered of fortune and treason !
Child alien of blood !—it were reason
That all should cry yea unto this.

Friends, shall I bear to my lady the story ? (*Ant.*)
Shall I speak in her ear, her lord's baseness revealing ?
Whom she counted her all and in all—heretofore he
Had share in her dreams of a yet-coming glory.
Now in woe is she whelmed, but his heart hath found healing,
That he flouts the dear tresses and eld's silver-[strewing !

ἀτίετος φίλων.
μέλεος, ὃς θυραῖος ἐλθὼν δόμους
μέγαν ἐς ὄλβον οὐκ ἔσωσεν τύχας.
ὄλοιτ᾽ ὄλοιτο
πότνιαν ἐξαπαφὼν ἐμάν·
καὶ θεοῖσιν μὴ τύχοι
καλλίφλογα πέλανον ἐπὶ
πυρὶ καθαγνίσας· τὸ δ᾽ ἐμὸν εἴσεται
* * * * *
τύραννος ἡ φίλα φίλον.[1]
ἤδη πέλας δείπνων κυρεῖ
παῖς καὶ πατὴρ νέος νέων.

ἰὼ δειράδες Παρνασοῦ πέτρας ἐπῳδ.
ἔχουσαι σκόπελον οὐράνιόν θ᾽ ἕδραν,
ἵνα Βάκχιος ἀμφιπύρους ἀνέχων πεύκας
λαιψηρὰ πηδᾷ νυκτιπόλοις ἅμα σὺν Βάκχαις.
μή τί ποτ᾽ εἰς ἐμὰν πόλιν ἵκοιθ᾽ ὁ παῖς,
νέαν δ᾽ ἁμέραν ἀπολιπὼν θάνοι.
στενομένα γὰρ ἂν πόλις ἔχοι σκῆψιν
ξενικὸν εἰσβολάν.
ἅλις ὁ πάρος ἀρχαγὸς ὢν
Ἐρεχθεὺς ἄναξ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ πρέσβυ παιδαγώγ᾽ Ἐρεχθέως πατρὸς
τοὐμοῦ ποτ᾽ ὄντος, ἡνίκ᾽ ἦν ἔτ᾽ ἐν φάει,
ἔπαιρε σαυτὸν πρὸς θεοῦ χρηστήρια,
ὥς μοι συνησθῇς, εἴ τι Λοξίας ἄναξ
θέσπισμα παίδων εἰς γονὰς ἐφθέγξατο·
σὺν τοῖς φίλοις γὰρ ἡδὺ μὲν πράσσειν καλῶς·
ὃ μὴ γένοιτο δ᾽, εἴ τι τυγχάνοι κακόν,

[1] Bayfield: for MSS. τυραννίδος φίλα.

O caitiff and outlander, he that came stealing
On the wealth of a house he saved not from undoing ! [1]— [dealing—
Who would cozen my lady with treacherous
False one, away to thy ruin, thy ruin !
O'er the consecrate cake he shall lay
Mid your altar-flames, Gods, let them play
Unavailingly ! Ah but my queen
Shall know that I hold her the dearer !
Lo this strange feast draweth nearer
When the sire's strange son shall be seen.

Heights of Parnassus, rock-ridges upbearing (*Epode*)
The watchtower crags and the cloudland dome,
Where Bacchus, uptossing the pines flame-glaring,
Leaps mid his Bacchants through darkness that roam,
May never yon boy to my city come faring !
Be his birth-day the day of his doom !
For in sooth should our city be hard bestead
If an alien host to her hearths shall be led.
Suffice us Erechtheus, the kingly head
Of the Ancient Home !

Enter CREUSA *and* OLD SERVANT, *climbing the ascent to the Temple.*

CREUSA

Thou reverend child-ward of my sometime sire
Erechtheus, while he walked yet in the light,
Bear up, and press to yon God's oracle,
That thou mayst share my joy, if Loxias King
A boding-pledge of sons hath uttered forth.
'Tis sweet with friends to share prosperity :
And if—which God forbid—if ill befall,

[1] By perpetuating the race of true-born Erechtheids.

εἰς ὄμματ᾽ εὔνου φωτὸς ἐμβλέψαι γλυκύ.
ἐγὼ δέ σ᾽, ὥσπερ καὶ σὺ πατέρ᾽ ἐμόν ποτε,
δέσποιν᾽ ὅμως οὖσ᾽ ἀντικηδεύω πατρός.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, ἄξι᾽ ἀξίων γεννητόρων
ἤθη φυλάσσεις κοὐ καταισχύνασ᾽ ἔχεις
τοὺς σοὺς παλαιοὺς ἐκγόνους αὐτόχθονας.
ἕλχ᾽ ἕλκε πρὸς μέλαθρα καὶ κόμιζέ με.
αἰπεινά τοι μαντεῖα· τοῦ γήρως δέ μοι
συνεκπονοῦσα κῶλον ἰατρὸς γενοῦ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἕπου νυν· ἴχνος δ᾽ ἐκφύλασσ᾽ ὅπου τίθῃς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἰδού.
τὸ τοῦ ποδὸς μὲν βραδύ, τὸ τοῦ δὲ νοῦ ταχύ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

βάκτρῳ δ᾽ ἐρείδου περιφερῆ στίβον χθονός.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ τοῦτο τυφλόν, ὅταν ἐγὼ βλέπω βραχύ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὀρθῶς ἔλεξας· ἀλλὰ μὴ πάρες κόπῳ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὔκουν ἑκών γε· τοῦ δ᾽ ἀπόντος οὐ κρατῶ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

γυναῖκες, ἱστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν καὶ κερκίδος
δούλευμα πιστόν, τίνα τύχην λαβὼν πόσις
βέβηκε παίδων ὧνπερ εἵνεχ᾽ ἥκομεν,
σημήνατ᾽· εἰ γὰρ ἀγαθά μοι μηνύσετε,
οὐκ εἰς ἀπίστους δεσπότας βαλεῖς χαράν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ δαῖμον.

'Tis sweet to gaze in eyes of sympathy.
Now thine old loving tendance of my sire
I, though thy lady, render back to thee.

OLD SERVANT

My daughter, spirit worthy of noble sires
Thou keepest, and thou hast not put to shame
Thine old forefathers, children of the soil.
Draw, draw me towards the shrines, and bring me on.
Steep is the god-ward path: be thou physician
Unto mine age, and help my toiling limbs.

CREUSA

Follow: take heed where thou dost plant thy feet.

OLD SERVANT

Lo there!
Slow is the foot, still by the mind outstripped.

CREUSA

Try with thy staff the ground: lean hard thereon.

OLD SERVANT

Blind guide is this when mine eyes serve so ill.

CREUSA

Sooth said: yet yield not thou to weariness.

OLD SERVANT

I would not, but my lost strength I command not.

CREUSA

Women, which do leal service at my loom
And shuttle, show what fortune hath my lord
Found touching issue, for which cause we came.
For, if ye speak good tidings unto me,
Your queen shall not forget the debt of joy.

CHORUS

Ah fate!

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τὸ φροίμιον μὲν τῶν λόγων οὐκ εὐτυχές.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ τλᾶμον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ τι θεσφάτοισι δεσποτῶν νοσῶ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἶεν· τί δρῶμεν, θάνατος ὧν κεῖται πέρι;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τίς ἥδε μοῦσα, χὠ φόβος τίνων πέρι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἴπωμεν ἢ σιγῶμεν; ἢ τί δράσομεν;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἴφ'· ὡς ἔχεις γε συμφοράν τιν' εἰς ἐμέ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰρήσεταί τοι, κεἰ θανεῖν μέλλω διπλῇ.
οὐκ ἔστι σοι, δέσποιν', ἐπ' ἀγκάλαις λαβεῖν
τέκν' οὐδὲ μαστῷ σῷ προσαρμόσαι ποτέ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὤμοι, θάνοιμι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θύγατερ—

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ συμφορᾶς.
ἔλαβον, ἔπαθον ἄχος ἀβίοτον, φίλαι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

διοιχόμεσθα, τέκνον.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ·
διανταῖος ἔτυπεν ὀδύνα με πλευ-
μόνων τῶνδ' ἔσω.

OLD SERVANT (*aside*).

No happy-boding prelude of their speech!

CHORUS

Ah hapless!

OLD SERVANT (*aside*)

Ha, sinks mine heart for my lords' oracle!

CHORUS

What shall we do when death is in the path?

CREUSA

What means this strain, and wherefore is your fear?

CHORUS

Speech?—silence?—what is it that we should do?

CREUSA

Speak: something ye keep back that toucheth me.

CHORUS

Thou shalt be told,—yea, though I die twice over.
'Tis not for thee, my queen, in arms to fold
Children, nor press them ever to thy breast.

CREUSA

Ah, would I might die!

OLD SERVANT

Daughter—

CREUSA

Ah wretch!—ah me for my misery!
I have gotten sore hurt, my friends: what is life unto me?

OLD SERVANT

Undone—thou and I!
O child!

CREUSA

Ah me, ah me! for the anguish-dart
Hath pierced me through, and hath plunged deep into mine heart.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

μήπω στενάξῃς,

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀλλὰ πάρεισι γόοι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

πρὶν ἂν μάθωμεν—

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀγγελίαν τίνα μοι;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

εἰ ταὐτὰ πράσσων δεσπότης τῆς συμφορᾶς
κοινωνός ἐστιν, ἢ μόνη σὺ δυστυχεῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κείνῳ μέν, ὦ γεραιέ, παῖδα Λοξίας
ἔδωκεν, ἰδίᾳ δ' εὐτυχεῖ ταύτης δίχα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τόδ' ἐπὶ τῷδε κακὸν ἄκρον ἔλακες ἔλακες
ἄχος ἐμοὶ στένειν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

πότερα δὲ φῦναι δεῖ γυναικὸς ἔκ τινος
τὸν παῖδ' ὃν εἶπας, ἢ γεγῶτ' ἐθέσπισεν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἤδη πεφυκότ' ἐκτελῆ νεανίαν
δίδωσιν αὐτῷ Λοξίας· παρῆ δ' ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πῶς φῄς; ἄφατον ἄφατον ἀναύδητον
λόγον ἐμοὶ θροεῖς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

κἄμοιγε. πῶς δ' ὁ χρησμὸς ἐκπεραίνεται
σαφέστερόν μοι φράζε, χὤστις ἔσθ' ὁ παῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅτῳ ξυναντήσειεν ἐκ ναοῦ συθεὶς
πρώτῳ πόσις σός, παῖδ' ἔδωκ' αὐτῷ θεός.

OLD SERVANT

Nay, moan not yet—

CREUSA

But wailings the soul of me fill!

OLD SERVANT

Ere we shall learn—

CREUSA

What tidings remain for me still?

OLD SERVANT

If in the same calamity our lord
Have part, or thine alone misfortune be.

CHORUS

Ancient, to him hath Loxias given a son,
And private joy is his, unshared of her.

CREUSA

Ah sorrow on sorrow, for crown of sorrow, and woes
for my sighing!

OLD SERVANT

But of some woman must he yet be born,
This child?—or did the God proclaim him born?

CHORUS

Already born—nay more, a stripling grown
Doth Loxias give him. I was there, and heard.

CREUSA

How sayest thou?—nameless, unspeakable things in
mine ears art thou crying—

OLD SERVANT

And mine. But how works out the oracle?
More clearly tell me: who the lad is, tell.

CHORUS

Whomso thy lord should first meet as he passed
From the God's fane, the God gave him for son.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὀτοτοτοῖ· τὸ δ' ἐμὸν ἄτεκνον ἄτεκνον ἔλαβεν
ἄρα βίοτον, ἐρημίᾳ δ' ὀρφανοὺς
δόμους οἰκήσω.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τίς οὖν ἐχρήσθη; τῷ συνῆψ' ἴχνος ποδὸς
πόσις ταλαίνης; πῶς δὲ ποῦ νιν εἰσιδών;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἶσθ', ὦ φίλη δέσποινα, τὸν νεανίαν
ὃς τόνδ' ἔσαιρε ναόν; οὗτος ἔσθ' ὁ παῖς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀν' ὑγρὸν ἀμπταίην αἰθέρα πόρσω γαί-
ας Ἑλλανίας, ἀστέρας ἑσπέρους,
οἷον οἷον ἄλγος ἔπαθον, φίλαι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὄνομα δὲ ποῖον αὐτὸν ὀνομάζει πατήρ;
οἶσθ', ἢ σιωπῇ τοῦτ' ἀκύρωτον μένει;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἴων', ἐπείπερ πρῶτος ἤντησεν πατρί.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

μητρὸς δ' ὁποίας ἐστίν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.
φροῦδος δ', ἵν' εἰδῇς πάντα τἀπ' ἐμοῦ, γέρον,
παιδὸς προθύσων ξένια καὶ γενέθλια,
σκηνὰς ἐς ἱερὰς τῆσδε λαθραίως πόσις,
κοινῇ ξυνάψων δαῖτα παιδὶ τῷ νέῳ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

δέσποινα, προδεδόμεσθα, σὺν γάρ σοι νοσῶ,
τοῦ σοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρός, καὶ μεμηχανημένως
ὑβριζόμεσθα δωμάτων τ' Ἐρεχθέως

CREUSA

Ah me! ah me!—and my weird
Of barrenness, barrenness grippeth my life!—
desolation-oppressed
Shall I live on, living in childless halls!

OLD SERVANT

Who was the child foretold? whom met he first,
Our sad queen's lord? How saw he him, and where?

CHORUS

Rememberest thou, O dear my queen, the youth
That swept the temple's floor? That son is he.

CREUSA

Oh to flee on the wings of a bird
Through the ocean of air, and from Hellas afar to
the stars of the west!
Such pain on me, friends, such anguish falls!

OLD SERVANT

And what name hath his father given to him?
Know'st thou? Or bideth this unfixed, unsaid?

CHORUS

Ion, since he was first to meet his sire.

OLD SERVANT

His mother, who?

CHORUS

Thereof can I say naught.
My lady's spouse hath stol'n—that all my tale
Be known of thee—into the festal tent,
To sacrifice for welcoming and birth,
And spread a public feast for this new son.

OLD SERVANT

Betrayed, Queen, are we—for thy pain is mine—
Of this thy lord; by treason-stratagems
Insulted; from Erechtheus' palace-halls

ἐκβαλλόμεσθα· καὶ σὸν οὐ στυγῶν πόσιν
λέγω, σὲ μέντοι μᾶλλον ἢ κεῖνον φιλῶν·
ὅστις σε γήμας ξένος ἐπεισελθὼν πόλιν
καὶ δῶμα καὶ σὴν παραλαβὼν παγκληρίαν,
ἄλλης γυναικὸς παῖδας ἐκκαρπούμενος
λάθρᾳ πέφηνεν· ὡς λάθρᾳ δ', ἐγὼ φράσω·
ἐπεί σ' ἄτεκνον ᾔσθετ', οὐκ ἔστεργέ σοι
ὅμοιος εἶναι τῆς τύχης τ' ἴσον φέρειν,
λαβὼν δὲ δοῦλα λέκτρα νυμφεύσας λάθρᾳ
τὸν παῖδ' ἔφυσεν, ἐξενωμένον δέ τῳ
Δελφῶν δίδωσιν ἐκτρέφειν· ὁ δ' ἐν θεοῦ
δόμοισιν ἄφετος, ὡς λάθοι, παιδεύεται.
νεανίαν δ' ὡς ᾔσθετ' ἐκτεθραμμένον,
ἐλθεῖν σ' ἔπεισε δεῦρ' ἀπαιδίας χάριν.
κᾆθ' ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐψεύσαθ', ὅδε δ' ἐψεύσατο
πάλαι τρέφων τὸν παῖδα, κἄπλεκεν πλοκὰς
τοιάσδ'· ἁλοὺς μὲν ἀνέφερ' εἰς τὸν δαίμονα,
†ἐλθὼν δὲ καὶ τὸν χρόνον ἀμύνεσθαι θέλων†
τυραννίδ' αὐτῷ περιβαλεῖν ἔμελλε γῆς.
καινὸν δὲ τοὔνομ' ἀνὰ χρόνον πεπλασμένον,
Ἴων, ἰόντι δῆθεν ὅτι συνήντετο.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμοι, πανούργους ἄνδρας ὡς ἀεὶ στυγῶ,
οἳ συντιθέντες τἄδικ' εἶτα μηχαναῖς
κοσμοῦσι. φαῦλον χρηστὸν ἂν λαβεῖν φίλον
θέλοιμι μᾶλλον ἢ κακὸν σοφώτερον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ τῶνδ' ἁπάντων ἔσχατον πείσει κακόν·
ἀμήτορ', ἀναρίθμητον, ἐκ δούλης τινὸς
γυναικός, εἰς σὸν δῶμα δεσπότην ἄγειν.
ἁπλοῦν ἂν ἦν γὰρ τὸ κακόν, εἰ παρ' εὐγενοῦς
μητρός, πιθών σε, σὴν λέγων ἀπαιδίαν,

Cast forth! And this I say, as hating not
Thy lord, but better loving thee than him,
Who came a stranger to thy burg and home,
Wedded thee, and received thine heritage,
And of another woman gat him sons
Clandestine: this "clandestine" will I prove:—
Knowing thee barren, he was not content
To share thy fortune, to partake thy lot,
But took a slave to his clandestine bed,
Begat this son, from Athens sent him, gave
Unto some Delphian's fostering: for concealment
Was he reared in the temple, consecrate.

Then, when he knew the stripling fully grown,
He drew thee hither by the hope of sons.
So, not the God hath lied, but this man lied,
Rearing so long the lad, weaving such plots.
Detected here, he would cast it on the God:
But, safe in Athens, he would set her crown
Upon him, guarding 'gainst the chance of time.
But this *new name's* misdated forgery!
Ion—set eye on him then first, forsooth!

CHORUS

Ah me! how evermore I loathe the knave
That plotteth wrongs, and then with stratagem
Tricks forth! Be mine the friend of simple soul
Yet honest, rather than the craftier villain.

OLD SERVANT

And a worse ill than all this must thou know,
To take into thine house for lord thereof
A slave's brat, motherless, of none account!
'Twere but one ill, if from a free-born womb,
With thy consent, pleading thy barrenness,

ἐσῴκισ' οἴκους· εἰ δὲ σοὶ τόδ' ἦν πικρόν,
τῶν Αἰόλου νιν χρῆν ὀρεχθῆναι γάμων.
ἐκ τῶνδε δεῖ σε δὴ γυναικεῖόν τι δρᾶν·
ἢ γὰρ ξίφος λαβοῦσαν ἢ δόλῳ τινὶ
ἢ φαρμάκοισι σὸν κατακτεῖναι πόσιν
καὶ παῖδα, πρὶν σοὶ θάνατον ἐκ κείνων μολεῖν.
[εἰ γάρ γ' ὑφήσεις τοῦδ', ἀπαλλάξει βίου·
δυοῖν γὰρ ἐχθροῖν εἰς ἓν ἐλθόντοιν στέγος,
ἢ θάτερον δεῖ δυστυχεῖν ἢ θάτερον.]
ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν σοι καὶ συνεκπονεῖν θέλω,
καὶ συμφονεύειν παῖδ' ἐπεισελθὼν δόμοις
οὗ δαῖθ' ὁπλίζει, καὶ τροφεῖα δεσπόταις
ἀποδοὺς θανεῖν τε ζῶν τε φέγγος εἰσορᾶν.
ἓν γάρ τι τοῖς δούλοισιν αἰσχύνην φέρει,
τοὔνομα· τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα τῶν ἐλευθέρων
οὐδὲν κακίων δοῦλος, ὅστις ἐσθλὸς ᾖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κἀγώ, φίλη δέσποινα, συμφορὰν θέλω
κοινουμένη τήνδ' ἢ θανεῖν ἢ ζῆν καλῶς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ ψυχά, πῶς σιγάσω;
πῶς δὲ σκοτίας ἀναφήνω
εὐνάς, αἰδοῦς δ' ἀπολειφθῶ;
τί γὰρ ἐμπόδιον κώλυμ' ἔτι μοι;
πρὸς τίν' ἀγῶνας τιθέμεσθ' ἀρετῆς,
οὐ πόσις ἡμῶν προδότης γέγονεν;
στέρομαι δ' οἴκων, στέρομαι παίδων,
φροῦδαι δ' ἐλπίδες, ἃς διαθέσθαι
χρῄζουσα καλῶς οὐκ ἐδυνήθην,
σιγῶσα γάμους,
σιγῶσα τόκους πολυκλαύτους.
ἀλλ' οὐ τὸ Διὸς πολύαστρον ἕδος

He found an heir. Or, if this liked thee not,
He ought to have sought a wife of Aeolus' race.
Now, something worthy of woman must thou do—
Grasp thou the sword, or by some wiliness
Or poison slay thine husband and his son,
Ere treacherous death shall come from them to thee.
For, if thou flinch, 'tis thou shalt lose thy life:
For, when two foes beneath one roof be met,
This one or that one must the victim be.
Willing am I with thee to share this work,
To enter the pavilion, slay the lad
Where he prepares the feast:—repaying so
My lords their nurture, let me die or live!
There is but one thing bringeth shame to slaves,
The name: in all beside no slave is worse
Than free men, so he bear an upright soul.

CHORUS

I too, dear mistress, I consent to share
Thy fate,—or death, or honourable life.

CREUSA

O, how keep silence, my soul?
Yet how shall I dare to unroll
Deeds hidden of darkness, and cast the shame behind me?
Yet what thing remaineth to fetter me, what thing to bind me?
With whom can I stand in virtuc's glorious strife?
Hath not mine husband a traitor been shown to his wife?
I am wholly of home bereft, am of children bereft:
Of the hopes unavailing I cherished not one is left,
Who dreamed I should order all things well,
Yet naught of that bridal of horror tell,
Naught of the birth amid tears that befell.
Now nay—by the palace of Zeus star-brightened,

καὶ τὴν ἐπ' ἐμοῖς σκοπέλοισι θεὰν
λίμνης τ' ἐνύδρου Τριτωνιάδος
πότνιαν ἀκτάν,
οὐκέτι κρύψω λέχος, ὡς στέρνων
ἀπονησαμένη ῥᾴων ἔσομαι.
στάζουσι κόραι δακρύοισιν ἐμαί,
ψυχὰ δ' ἀλγεῖ κακοβουληθεῖσ'
ἔκ τ' ἀνθρώπων ἔκ τ' ἀθανάτων,
οὓς ἀποδείξω
λέκτρων προδότας ἀχαρίστους.

ὦ τᾶς ἑπταφθόγγου μέλπων
κιθάρας ἐνοπάν, ἅτ' ἀγραύλοις
κέρασιν ἐν ἀψύχοις ἀχεῖ
μουσᾶν ὕμνους εὐαχήτους,
σοὶ μομφάν, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ,
πρὸς τάνδ' αὐγὰν αὐδάσω.
ἦλθές μοι χρυσῷ χαίταν
μαρμαίρων, εὖτ' εἰς κόλπους
κρόκεα πέταλα φάρεσιν ἔδρεπον
ἀνθίζειν χρυσανταυγῆ·
λευκοῖς δ' ἐμφὺς καρποῖσιν
χειρῶν εἰς ἄντρου κοίτας
κραυγὰν Ὦ μᾶτέρ μ' αὐδῶσαν
θεὸς ὁμευνέτας
ἆγες ἀναιδείᾳ
Κύπριδι χάριν πράσσων.

τίκτω δ' ἁ δύστανός σοι
κοῦρον, τὸν φρίκᾳ ματρὸς
εἰς εὐνὰν βάλλω τὰν σάν,
ἵνα με λέχεσι μέλεα μέλεος
ἐξεύξω τὰν δύστανον.

By the watchtower crag where my Goddess's
throne is,
By the holy shore of the mere Tritonis
Full-brimming mid Libya's plain,
Mine outrage no more will I hide, that lightened
My bosom may be of its pain.
Mine eyes are a fountain of tears fast-welling,
And mine heart is betrayed and anguish-riven,
Betrayed of lovers on earth, in heaven!
I will speak it, that thankless name forth telling,
And the tale of the traitor to love shall be given.

Lord of the seven-voiced lyre, who attunest the cry of
its strings, [note sings
Under whose fingers the lifeless awaketh, a sweet
From the horn of the ox of the field, the chant of the
Muses outrings—

Child of Latona, I cry to the Sun—I will publish
thy shame! [the flowers as I came
Thou, with thy tresses a-shimmer with gold, through
Plucking the crocuses, heaping my veil with their
gold-litten flame,

Cam'st on me, caughtest the poor pallid wrists of mine
hands and didst hale
Unto thy couch in the cave,—"Mother! mother!" I
shrieked out my wail,—
Wroughtest the pleasure of Cypris: no shame made
the god-lover quail.

Wretched I bare thee a child, and I cast him with
shuddering throe [a bride-bed of woe.
Forth on thy couch where thou forcedst thy victim,
Lost—my poor baby and thine! for the eagles
devoured him:—and lo,

οἴμοι μοι· καὶ νῦν ἔρρει
πτανοῖς ἁρπασθεὶς θοίνα
παῖς μοι καὶ σὸς τλάμων,
σὺ δὲ κιθάρᾳ κλάζεις
παιᾶνας μέλπων.

ὠή, τὸν Λατοῦς αὐδῶ,
ὃς ὀμφὰν κληροῖς
πρὸς χρυσέους θάκους καὶ
γαίας μεσσήρεις ἕδρας,
εἰς οὖς αὐδὰν καρύξω·
ἰὼ κακὸς εὐνάτωρ,
ὃς τῷ μὲν ἐμῷ νυμφεύτᾳ
χάριν οὐ προλαβὼν
παῖδ' εἰς οἴκους οἰκίζεις·
ὁ δ' ἐμὸς γενέτας καὶ σὸς ἀμαθὴς
οἰωνοῖς ἔρρει συλαθείς, [οἰκεῖα]
σπάργανα ματέρος ἐξαλλάξας.
μισεῖ σ' ἁ Δᾶλος καὶ δάφνας
ἔρνεα φοίνικα παρ' ἁβροκόμαν,
ἔνθα λοχεύματα σέμν' ἐλοχεύσατο
Λατὼ Δίοισί σε καρποῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμοι, μέγας θησαυρὸς ὡς ἀνοίγνυται
κακῶν, ἐφ' οἷσι πᾶς ἂν ἐκβάλοι δάκρυ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, οἴκτου σὸν βλέπων ἐμπίπλαμαι
πρόσωπον, ἔξω δ' ἐγενόμην γνώμης ἐμῆς.
κακῶν γὰρ ἄρτι κῦμ' ὑπεξαντλῶν φρενί,
πρύμνηθεν αἴρει μ' ἄλλο σῶν λόγων ὕπο,
οὓς ἐκβαλοῦσα τῶν παρεστώτων κακῶν
μετῆλθες ἄλλων πημάτων κακὰς ὁδούς.

Victory-songs to thy lyre dost thou chant! Ho, I call to thee, son
Born to Latona, Dispenser of Boding, on gold-gleaming throne
Midmost of earth who art sitting:—thine ears shall be pierced with my moan!

Ah, ravisher-bridegroom thou!
What ailed thee to give to my spouse—
Requiting no service, I trow!—
A son to be heir to his house?
But my baby and thine, O heartless, was taken
For a prey of the eagles: long ere now
Were the swaddling-bands of his mother forsaken.

Thy Delos doth hate thee, thy bay-boughs abhor thee,
By the palm-tree of feathery frondage that rose
Where in sacred travail Latona bore thee
Unto Zeus for the fruit of her throes.

CHORUS

Ah me, what mighty treasure-house is opened
Of sore affliction whereat all shall weep!

OLD SERVANT

Ah daughter, gazing on thy face I fill
With pity: yea, my mind is all distraught.
For, while one surge of ills yet drowns my soul,
High rolls astern another from thy words.
For, soon as thou hadst told thy present ills,
Thou followedst the dark track of other woes.

τί φής; τίνα λόγον Λοξίου κατηγορεῖς;
ποῖον τεκεῖν φὴς παῖδα; ποῦ θεῖναι πόλεως
θηρσὶν φίλον τύμβευμ᾽; ἄνελθέ μοι πάλιν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

αἰσχύνομαι μέν σ᾽, ὦ γέρον, λέξω δ᾽ ὅμως.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὡς συστενάζειν γ᾽ οἶδα γενναίως φίλοις.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄκουε τοίνυν· οἶσθα Κεκροπίας πέτρας
πρόσβορρον ἄντρον, ἃς Μακρὰς κικλήσκομεν;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οἶδ᾽, ἔνθα Πανὸς ἄδυτα καὶ βωμοὶ πέλας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐνταῦθ᾽ ἀγῶνα δεινὸν ἠγωνίσμεθα.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τίν᾽; ὡς ἀπαντᾷ δάκρυά μοι τοῖς σοῖς λόγοις.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Φοίβῳ ξυνῆψ᾽ ἄκουσα δύστηνον γάμον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ θύγατερ· ἆρ᾽ ἦν ταῦθ᾽ ἅ γ᾽ ᾐσθόμην ἐγώ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκ οἶδ᾽· ἀληθῆ δ᾽ εἰ λέγεις, φαίημεν ἄν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

νόσον κρυφαίαν ἡνίκ᾽ ἔστενες λάθρᾳ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τότ᾽ ἦν ἃ νῦν σοι φανερὰ σημαίνω κακά.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

κᾆτ᾽ ἐξέκλεψας πῶς Ἀπόλλωνος γάμους;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔτεκον· ἀνάσχου ταῦτ᾽ ἐμοῦ κλύων, γέρον.

What say'st thou? What dost lay to Loxias' charge?
What child hast borne? In Athens where didst cast
him
To gladden a living grave?—tell yet again.

CREUSA

Ancient, I blush before thee, yet will tell.

OLD SERVANT

To weep with friends that weep, full well I know.

CREUSA

Hear then:—the Rocks of Cecrops knowest thou,
The Long Cliff named?—the northward-facing cave?

OLD SERVANT

I know: Pan's shrine and altars stand thereby.

CREUSA

Even there I agonized in that dread strife—

OLD SERVANT

What?—lo, how start my tears to meet thy words!

CREUSA

With Phoebus linked sore loth in woeful bridal.

OLD SERVANT

Ah daughter, was it this myself had marked?

CREUSA

Had marked?—If sooth thou sayest, I will tell.

OLD SERVANT

Thy secret sighing as with hidden pain?

CREUSA

Yea; then befell the ills I now lay bare.

OLD SERVANT

And how didst thou conceal Apollo's rape?

CREUSA

I travailed—bear to hear my tale, old friend!—

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ποῦ ; τίς λοχεύει σ' ; ἢ μόνη μοχθεῖς τάδε ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

μόνη κατ' ἄντρον οὗπερ ἐζεύχθην γάμοις.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὁ παῖς δὲ ποῦ 'στιν, ἵνα σὺ μηκέτ' ᾖς ἄπαις ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τέθνηκεν, ὦ γεραιέ, θηρσὶν ἐκτεθείς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τέθνηκ' ; Ἀπόλλων δ' ὁ κακὸς οὐδὲν ἤρκεσεν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκ ἤρκεσ'· Ἅιδου δ' ἐν δόμοις παιδεύεται.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τίς γάρ νιν ἐξέθηκεν ; οὐ γὰρ δὴ σύ γε.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἡμεῖς, ἐν ὄρφνῃ σπαργανώσαντες πέπλοις.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐδὲ ξυνῄδει σοί τις ἔκθεσιν τέκνου ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

αἱ ξυμφοραί γε καὶ τὸ λανθάνειν μόνον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ἐν ἄντρῳ παῖδα σὸν λιπεῖν ἔτλης ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πῶς δ' ; οἰκτρὰ πολλὰ στόματος ἐκβαλοῦσ' ἔπη.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

φεῦ·
τλήμων σὺ τόλμης, ὁ δὲ θεὸς μᾶλλον σέθεν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἰ παῖδά γ' εἶδες χεῖρας ἐκτείνοντά μοι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

μαστὸν διώκοντ' ἢ πρὸς ἀγκάλαις πεσεῖν ;

OLD SERVANT

Who tended thee? . . . . alone in trial's hour!

CREUSA

Alone within the cave that saw my rape.

OLD SERVANT

And the boy, where?—that thou no more be childless.

CREUSA

Dead is he, ancient,—unto beasts cast out.

OLD SERVANT

Dead?—and Apollo, traitor! helped thee naught?

CREUSA

Helped not. The child is nursed in Hades' halls.

OLD SERVANT

Who cast him forth? Not thou—O never thou!

CREUSA

Even I. My vesture darkling swaddled him.

OLD SERVANT

Nor any knew the exposing of the child?

CREUSA

None—Misery and Secrecy alone.

OLD SERVANT

How couldst thou leave thy babe within the cave?

CREUSA

Ah how?—O pitiful farewells I moaned!

OLD SERVANT

Poor heart of steel!—O God's heart harder yet!

CREUSA

Ah, hadst thou seen the babe's hands stretched to me!

OLD SERVANT

Seeking the breast, the cradle of thine arms?

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ἐνταῦθ᾽, ἵν᾽ οὐκ ὢν ἄδικ᾽ ἔπασχεν ἐξ ἐμοῦ.
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
σοὶ δ᾽ ἐς τί δόξ᾽ εἰσῆλθεν ἐκβαλεῖν τέκνον;
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ὡς τὸν θεὸν σώσοντα τόν γ᾽ αὑτοῦ γόνον.
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
οἴμοι, δόμων σῶν ὄλβος ὡς χειμάζεται.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
τί κρᾶτα κρύψας, ὦ γέρον, δακρυρροεῖς;
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
σὲ καὶ πατέρα σὸν δυστυχοῦντας εἰσορῶν.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
τὰ θνητὰ τοιαῦτ᾽· οὐδὲν ἐν ταὐτῷ μένει.
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
μή νυν ἔτ᾽ οἴκτων, θύγατερ, ἀντεχώμεθα.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
τί γάρ με χρὴ δρᾶν; ἀπορία τὸ δυστυχεῖν.
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
τὸν πρῶτον ἀδικήσαντά σ᾽ ἀποτίνου θεόν.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
καὶ πῶς τὰ κρείσσω θνητὸς οὖσ᾽ ὑπερδράμω;
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
πίμπρη τὰ σεμνὰ Λοξίου χρηστήρια.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
δέδοικα· καὶ νῦν πημάτων ἄδην ἔχω.
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
τὰ δυνατά νυν τόλμησον, ἄνδρα σὸν κτανεῖν.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
αἰδούμεθ᾽ εὐνὰς τὰς τόθ᾽ ἡνίκ᾽ ἐσθλὸς ἦν.
ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
σὺ δ᾽ ἀλλὰ παῖδα τὸν ἐπὶ σοὶ πεφηνότα.

CREUSA

Where he lay not, and so had wrong of me.

OLD SERVANT

And in what hope didst thou cast forth the babe?

CREUSA

That the God yet would save him—his own child.

OLD SERVANT

Ah me, what tempest wrecks thine house's weal!

CREUSA

Why dost thou, ancient, veil thine head, and weep?

OLD SERVANT

Seeing calamity, thy sire's and thine.

CREUSA

'Tis man's lot: naught continueth at one stay.

OLD SERVANT

Cling we no more to wailings, daughter, now.

CREUSA

What must I do?—so helpless misery is.

OLD SERVANT

Avenge thee on the God who wronged thee first.

CREUSA

How?—I, a mortal, triumph o'er the strong?

OLD SERVANT

Set thou the torch to Loxias' holy shrine.

CREUSA

I fear:—even now I have enough of woes.

OLD SERVANT

Then dare the thing thou canst: thine husband slay.

CREUSA

I cannot—for old love and loyalty's sake.

OLD SERVANT

The boy, at least, thus foisted upon thee.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πῶς ; εἰ γὰρ εἴη δυνατόν· ὡς θέλοιμί γ' ἄν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ξιφηφόρους σοὺς ὁπλίσασ' ὀπάονας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

στείχοιμ' ἄν· ἀλλὰ ποῦ γενήσεται τόδε ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἱεραῖσιν ἐν σκηναῖσιν, οὗ θοινᾷ φίλους.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐπίσημον ὁ φόνος, καὶ τὸ δοῦλον ἀσθενές.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὤμοι, κακίζει. φέρε, σύ νυν βούλευέ τι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ μὴν ἔχω γε δόλια καὶ δραστήρια.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἀμφοῖν ἂν εἴην τοῖνδ' ὑπηρέτης ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄκουε τοίνυν· οἶσθα γηγενῆ μάχην ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οἶδ', ἣν Φλέγρᾳ Γίγαντες ἔστησαν θεοῖς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐνταῦθα Γοργόν' ἔτεκε Γῆ, δεινὸν τέρας.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἦ παισὶν αὑτῆς σύμμαχον, θεῶν πόνον ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ναί· καί νιν ἔκτειν' ἡ Διὸς Παλλὰς θεά.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἆρ' οὗτός ἐσθ' ὁ μῦθος ὃν κλύω πάλαι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ταύτης 'Αθάνα δέρος ἐπὶ στέρνοις ἔχει.

CREUSA

How?—would 'twere possible!—how fain would I!

OLD SERVANT

With daggers arm the servants of thy train.

CREUSA

I will go straight:—but when to strike the blow?

OLD SERVANT

In the pavilion, where he feasts his friends.

CREUSA

Murder in public—and by weakling thralls!

OLD SERVANT

Woe! thine heart fails. Do thine own plotting now.

CREUSA

Ha, mine is secret guile and triumph sure.

OLD SERVANT

Yea, both?—then will I be thy minister.

CREUSA

Hear then:—thou knowest of the Earth-born War?

OLD SERVANT

Yea, giants stood in Phlegra 'gainst the Gods.

CREUSA

There Earth brought forth the Gorgon, monster dread—

OLD SERVANT

To help her sons, and press the Gods full hard?

CREUSA

Yea, and Zeus' Daughter, Goddess Pallas, slew it.

OLD SERVANT

Meseems I heard this legend long ago—

CREUSA

How on her breast Athena bore its skin.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἣν αἰγίδ' ὀνομάζουσι, Παλλάδος στολήν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τόδ' ἔσχεν ὄνομα θεῶν ὅτ' ᾖξεν εἰς δόρυ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ποῖόν τι μορφῆς σχῆμ' ἔχουσαν ἀγρίας ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

θώρακ' ἐχίδνης περιβόλοις ὡπλισμένον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί δῆτα, θύγατερ, τοῦτο σοῖς ἐχθροῖς βλάβος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Ἐριχθόνιον οἶσθ' ἢ οὔ ; τί δ' οὐ μέλλεις, γέρον ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὃν πρῶτον ὑμῶν πρόγονον ἐξανῆκε γῆ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τούτῳ δίδωσι Παλλὰς ὄντι νεογόνῳ—

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί χρῆμα ; μέλλον γάρ τι προσφέρεις ἔπος.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

δισσοὺς σταλαγμοὺς αἵματος Γοργοῦς ἄπο.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἰσχὺν ἔχοντας τίνα πρὸς ἀνθρώπου φύσιν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὸν μὲν θανάσιμον, τὸν δ' ἀκεσφόρον νόσων.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἐν τῷ καθάψας' ἀμφὶ παιδὶ σώματος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

χρυσοῖσι δεσμοῖς· ὃ δὲ δίδωσ' ἐμῷ πατρί.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

κείνου δὲ κατθανόντος εἰς σ' ἀφίκετο ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ναί· κἀπὶ καρπῷ γ' αὔτ' ἐγὼ χερὸς φέρω.

OLD SERVANT

Ay, named the Aegis, Pallas's array?

CREUSA

Of Gods named, from her battle-eager charge.

OLD SERVANT

What was the fashion of its grisly form?

CREUSA

A breastplate fenced with ring on ring of snakes.

OLD SERVANT

But, daughter, how shall this thing harm thy foes?

CREUSA

Knowest thou Erichthonius?—thou must.

OLD SERVANT

First father of your line, whom earth brought forth?

CREUSA

To him gave Pallas in his hour of birth—

OLD SERVANT

What?—thy word falters in the utterance.

CREUSA

Two drops of blood—of that same Gorgon's blood.

OLD SERVANT

What power have they upon the life of man?

CREUSA

For death one, one for healing of disease.

OLD SERVANT

And hung them on the child—wherein enclosed?

CREUSA

A golden clasp. He gave it to my sire.

OLD SERVANT

And, when Erechtheus died, to thee it passed?

CREUSA

Yea; and I bear it ever on my wrist.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

πῶς οὖν κέκρανται δίπτυχον δῶρον θεᾶς ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κοίλης μὲν ὅστις φλεβὸς ἀπέσταξεν φόνῳ—

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί τῷδε χρῆσθαι ; δύνασιν ἐκφέρει τίνα ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

νόσους ἀπείργει καὶ τροφὰς ἔχει βίου.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὁ δεύτερος δ' ἀριθμὸς ὃν λέγεις τί δρᾷ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κτείνει, δρακόντων ἰὸς ὢν τῶν Γοργόνος.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

εἰς ἓν δὲ κραθέντ' αὐτὸν ἢ χωρὶς φορεῖς ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

χωρίς· κακῷ γὰρ ἐσθλὸν οὐ συμμίγνυται.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ φιλτάτη παῖ, πάντ' ἔχεις ὅσων σε δεῖ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τούτῳ θανεῖται παῖς· σὺ δ' ὁ κτείνων ἔσει.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ποῦ καὶ τί δράσας ; σὸν λέγειν, τολμᾶν δ' ἐμόν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις, δῶμ' ὅταν τοὐμὸν μόλῃ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐκ εὖ τόδ' εἶπας· καὶ σὺ γὰρ τοὐμὸν ψέγεις.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πῶς ; ἆρ' ὑπείδου τοῦθ' ὃ κἄμ' ἐσέρχεται ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σὺ παῖδα δόξεις διολέσαι, κεὶ μὴ κτενεῖς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὀρθῶς· φθονεῖν γάρ φασι μητρυιὰς τέκνοις.

OLD SERVANT

How is the Goddess' gift twofold ordained?

CREUSA

Each drop that welled in death from the *hollow vein*—

OLD SERVANT

To what serves this? What virtue beareth it?

CREUSA

Averts diseases, fostereth the life.

OLD SERVANT

The second thou hast named—what doeth it?

CREUSA

Slayeth: 'tis venom of the Gorgon's snakes.

OLD SERVANT

Mingled in one, or several, dost thou bear it?

CREUSA

Several: good with evil blendeth not.

OLD SERVANT

O child, O dearest, thou hast all thy need!

CREUSA

Hereby the lad shall die, the slayer thou.

OLD SERVANT

Where?—by what deed? Thou tell, and I will dare.

CREUSA

In Athens, when he cometh to mine home.

OLD SERVANT

Ill rede is thine—as mine was in thy sight.

CREUSA

Ha, doth thine heart's misgiving jump with mine?

OLD SERVANT

Thou shouldst be murderess held, though innocent.

CREUSA

Even so—the old tale of stepdame's jealousy.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

αὐτοῦ νυν αὐτὸν κτεῖν', ἵν' ἀρνήσει φόνους.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

προλάζυμαι γοῦν τῷ χρόνῳ τῆς ἡδονῆς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ σόν γε λήσεις πόσιν ἅ σε σπεύδει λαθεῖν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οἶσθ' οὖν ὃ δρᾶσον; χειρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς λαβὼν
χρύσωμ' Ἀθάνας τόδε, παλαιὸν ὄργανον,
ἐλθὼν ἵν' ἡμῖν βουθυτεῖ λάθρα πόσις,
δείπνων ὅταν λήγωσι καὶ σπονδὰς θεοῖς
μέλλωσι λείβειν, ἐν πέπλοις ἔχων τόδε
κάθες βαλὼν εἰς πῶμα τῷ νεανίᾳ,
ἰδίᾳ δέ, μή τι πᾶσι, χωρίσας ποτὸν
τῷ τῶν ἐμῶν μέλλοντι δεσπόζειν δόμων.
κἄνπερ διέλθῃ λαιμόν, οὔποθ' ἵξεται
κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας, κατθανὼν δ' αὐτοῦ μενεῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σὺ μέν νυν εἴσω προξένων μέθες πόδα·
ἡμεῖς δ' ἐφ' ᾧ τετάγμεθ' ἐκπονήσομεν.
ἄγ', ὦ γεραιὲ πούς, νεανίας γενοῦ
ἔργοισι, κεἰ μὴ τῷ χρόνῳ πάρεστί σοι.
ἐχθρὸν δ' ἐπ' ἄνδρα στεῖχε δεσποτῶν μέτα,
καὶ συμφόνευε καὶ συνεξαίρει δόμων.
τὴν δ' εὐσέβειαν εὐτυχοῦσι μὲν καλὸν
τιμᾶν· ὅταν δὲ πολεμίους δρᾶσαι κακῶς
θέλῃ τις, οὐδεὶς ἐμποδὼν κεῖται νόμος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Εἰνοδία θύγατερ Δάματρος, ἃ τῶν στρ. α'
νυκτιπόλων ἐφόδων ἀνάσσεις,

OLD SERVANT

Here slay him, then: so shall avail denial.

CREUSA

At least I shall the sooner taste that joy.

OLD SERVANT

Nor thy lord know thy knowledge of his secret.

CREUSA

Know'st then thy part? Receive thou from mine hand
Athena's golden vial, wrought of old.
Go where my lord holds this false sacrifice;
And, in the banquet's pause, when men will pour
Wine to the Gods, this have thou 'neath thy cloak,
And swiftly drop into the stripling's cup,—
That for his drinking, not the general bowl,—
Even his who seeks to lord it o'er mine house.
If once it pass his lips, ne'er shall he come
To glorious Athens: here shall he stay—dead.

OLD SERVANT

Unto thine host's house now withdraw thy foot;
And I through mine appointed task will toil.
Come, agèd foot, for deeds must thou grow young,
Though this be not by time vouchsafed to thee.
On, with thy mistress on, against the foe!
Help her to slay and cast him forth her home.
Fair faith?—O yea, fair faith for fortune fair:
But, when ye would wreak vengeance on your foes,
There is no law that lieth in the path.

[*Exeunt* CREUSA *and* OLD SERVANT.

CHORUS (*Str.* 1)

Goddess of Highways, Demeter's Daughter,[1]
Queen of the nightmare darkness-ranger,

[1] Hekate, goddess of sorcery and secret poisoning. She haunted places where roads crossed each other, and at night sent up demons and phantoms from Hades.

καὶ μεθαμερίων ὅδωσον δυσθανάτων
κρατήρων πληρώματ', ἐφ' οἷσι πέμπει
πότνια πότνι' ἐμὰ χθονίας
Γοργοῦς λαιμοτόμων ἀπὸ σταλαγμῶν
τῷ τῶν Ἐρεχθεϊδᾶν
δόμων ἐφαπτομένῳ·
μηδέ ποτ' ἄλλος ἄλλων ἀπ' οἴκων
πόλεως ἀνάσσοι
πλὴν τῶν εὐγενετᾶν Ἐρεχθειδᾶν.

εἰ δ' ἀτελὴς θάνατος σπουδαί τε δεσποί- ἀντ. α'
νας, ὅ τε καιρὸς ἄπεισι τόλμας,
ἅ τε νῦν φέρετ' ἐλπίς, ἢ θηκτὸν ξίφος ἢ
λαιμῶν[1] ἐξάψει βρόχον ἀμφὶ δειρήν,
πάθεσι πάθεα δ' ἐξανύτουσ'
εἰς ἄλλας βιότου κάτεισι μορφάς.
οὐ γὰρ δόμων γ' ἑτέρους
ἄρχοντας ἀλλοδαποὺς
ζῶσά ποτ' ὀμμάτων ἐν φαενναῖς
ἀνέχοιτ' ἂν αὐγαῖς
ἁ τῶν εὐπατριδᾶν γεγῶσ' οἴκων.

αἰσχύνομαι τὸν πολύυμνον στρ. β'
θεόν, εἰ παρὰ καλλιχόροισι παγαῖς
λαμπάδα θεωρὸν εἰκάδων

[1] Scaliger: for MSS. δαίμων.

Guide thou the hand that for noontide slaughter
Shall fill up the chalice, my lady's avenger,
Which beareth the venom-gouts that fell
From the neck of the Gorgon, the fiend of hell,
My lady's greeting-gift to the stranger
That usurpeth Erechtheus' royal sway,
That an alien of alien strain in our Athens never
may reign,
But the noble Erechtheïds—none save they!

(*Ant.* 1)

But—the death unaccomplished?—the deed un-
abetted
Of the hour, and my mistress's purposes ended,
And the hopes that upbore her?—remains the
sword whetted; [pended;
Remaineth the neck in the death-noose sus-
And, by agony ending the agony-strife,
Shall she pass to the life beyond this life.
For never this queen from kings descended
Shall endure that the splendour-light of her
eyne, [the ancient hall
No, not while she liveth, should fall on the shame of
Ruled by the upstart of alien line.

Shame for the God oft-chanted [1] (*Str.* 2)
In hymns, if *he*,[2]
Beside the fountains haunted
Of dances, see

[1] Dionysus, worshipped in the Eleusinian Mysteries with Demeter and Persephone. The 20th of Boëdromion was ushered in by a vast torch-light procession in which those newly initiated, who had kept vigil in the temple, joined.

[2] Ion, whose presence, as that of an alien by blood, would be profanation, yet whose initiation could, as a matter of policy, not be avoided.

ὄψεται ἐννύχιος ἄυπνος ὤν,
ὅτε καὶ Διὸς ἀστερωπὸς
ἀνεχόρευσεν αἰθήρ,
χορεύει δὲ σελάνα
καὶ πεντήκοντα κόραι
Νηρέος, αἱ κατὰ πόντον
ἀενάων τε ποταμῶν
δίνας χορευόμεναι,
τὰν χρυσοστέφανον κόραν
καὶ ματέρα σεμνάν·
ἵν' ἐλπίζει βασιλεύσειν
ἄλλων πόνον εἰσπεσὼν
ὁ Φοίβειος ἀλάτας.

ὁρᾶθ' ὅσοι δυσκελάδοισιν ἀντ. β
κατὰ μοῦσαν ἰόντες ἀείδεθ' ὕμνοις
ἁμέτερα λέχεα καὶ γάμους
Κύπριδος ἀθεμίτους ἀνοσίους,
ὅσον εὐσεβίᾳ κρατοῦμεν
ἄδικον ἄροτον ἀνδρῶν.
παλίμφαμος ἀοιδὰ
καὶ μοῦσ' εἰς ἄνδρας ἴτω
δυσκέλαδος ἀμφὶ λέκτρων.

With eyes long held from sleep
That Twentieth Dawn upleap,
See the torch-river's sweep, ere darkness flee,

When dances heaven star-glancing
  Adoringly,
When the white moon is dancing,
  And 'neath the sea .
The Nereids' dance enrings
The eternal river-springs,
And their full chorus sings Persephone

Gold-crowned, and our Earth-mother—
  Awful is she !—
Shall *he* press in, that other,
  To sovranty ?
Shall not his hopes be foiled ?—
Where kings and heroes toiled,
Shall that proud realm be spoiled, a vagrant's fee ?

Mark—ye whose strains of slander (*Ant.* 2)
  Scourge evermore
Woman in song, and brand her
  Wanton and whore,—
How high in virtue's place
We pass men's lawless race,
Nor spit in viper-lays your venom-store ;

But let the Muse of taunting
  On men's heads pour
Her indignation, chanting
  Her treason-lore ;
Sing of the outraged maid ;
Tell of the wife betrayed
By him who hath displayed his false heart's core,—

δείκνυσι γὰρ ὁ Διὸς ἐκ
παίδων ἀμνημοσύναν,
οὐ κοινὰν τεκέων τύχαν
οἴκοισι φυτεύσας
δεσποίνᾳ· πρὸς δ' Ἀφροδίταν
ἄλλαν θέμενος χάριν
νόθου παιδὸς ἔκυρσεν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

κλεινήν, γυναῖκες, ποῦ κόρην Ἐρεχθέως
δέσποιναν εὕρω ; πανταχῇ γὰρ ἄστεως
ζητῶν νιν ἐξέπλησα κοὐκ ἔχω λαβεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν, ὦ ξύνδουλε ; τίς προθυμία
ποδῶν ἔχει σε, καὶ λόγους τίνας φέρεις ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

θηρώμεθ'· ἀρχαὶ δ' ἀπιχώριοι χθονὸς
ζητοῦσιν αὐτήν, ὡς θάνῃ πετρουμένη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμοι, τί λέξεις ; οὔτι που λελήμμεθα
κρυφαῖον εἰς παῖδ' ἐκπορίζουσαι φόνον ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

ἔγνως· μεθέξεις δ' οὐκ ἐν ὑστάτοις κακοῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὤφθη δὲ πῶς τὰ κρυπτὰ μηχανήματα ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

τὸ μὴ δίκαιον τῆς δίκης ἡσσώμενον
ἐξηῦρεν ὁ θεός, οὐ μιανθῆναι θέλων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς ; ἀντιάζω σ' ἱκέτις ἐξειπεῖν τάδε.
πεπυσμέναι γὰρ εἰ θανεῖν ἡμᾶς χρεών,
ἥδιον ἂν θάνοιμεν, εἴθ' ὁρᾶν φάος.

This son of Zeus,[1] who flouted
  A queen's heart, sore
With childless hunger, scouted
  Troth-plight of yore :
Her right aside he thrust,
And mocked a nation's trust
For one that to his lust this bastard bore !

Enter SERVANT *in haste.*

SERVANT

Where, damsels, shall I light upon our mistress,
Erechtheus' daughter? All throughout the town
Seeking her have I ranged, and find her not.

CHORUS

What is it, fellow-thrall ? What hot-foot haste
Possesseth thee ? What tidings bearest thou ?

SERVANT

We are hunted ! Yea, the rulers of the land
Are seeking her, that she may die by stoning.

CHORUS

Ah me ! what say'st thou ? Are we taken then
Plotting the secret murder of yon lad ?

SERVANT

Yea, thou wilt share the doom—nor thou the last.

CHORUS

How were the hidden stratagems laid bare ?

SERVANT

The essay of right to vanquish wrong the God
Discovered, lest his temple be defiled.

CHORUS

How ?—suppliant I beseech thee, tell it out.
For, knowing all, if I indeed must die,
Death should be easier—yea, or sweeter life.

[1] Xuthus, descended through Aeolus from Zeus.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

ἐπεὶ θεοῦ μαντεῖον ᾤχετ' ἐκλιπὼν
πόσις Κρεούσης, παῖδα τὸν καινὸν λαβὼν
πρὸς δεῖπνα θυσίας θ' ἃς θεοῖς ὡπλίζετο,
Ξοῦθος μὲν ᾤχετ' ἔνθα πῦρ πηδᾷ θεοῦ
βακχεῖον, ὡς σφαγαῖσι Διονύσου πέτρας
δεύσειε δισσὰς παιδὸς ἀντ' ὀπτηρίων,
λέξας· σὺ μὲν νῦν, τέκνον, ἀμφήρεις μένων
σκηνὰς ἀνίστη τεκτόνων μοχθήμασιν.
θύσας δὲ γενέταις θεοῖσιν ἢν μακρὸν χρόνον
μένω, παροῦσι δαῖτες ἔστωσαν φίλοις.
λαβὼν δὲ μόσχους ᾤχεθ'· ὁ δὲ νεανίας
σεμνῶς ἀτοίχους περιβολὰς σκηνωμάτων
ὀρθοστάταις ἱδρύεθ', ἡλίου βολὰς
καλῶς φυλάξας, οὔτε πρὸς μέσας φλογὸς
ἀκτῖνας, οὔτ' αὖ πρὸς τελευτώσας βίον,
πλέθρου σταθμήσας μῆκος εἰς εὐγωνίαν,
μέτρημ' ἔχουσαν τοὐν μέσῳ γε μυρίων
ποδῶν ἀριθμόν, ὡς λέγουσιν οἱ σοφοί,
ὡς πάντα Δελφῶν λαὸν εἰς θοίνην καλῶν.
λαβὼν δ' ὑφάσμαθ' ἱερὰ θησαυρῶν πάρα
κατεσκίαζε, θαύματ' ἀνθρώποις ὁρᾶν.
πρῶτον μὲν ὀρόφῳ πτέρυγα περιβάλλει πέπλων
ἀνάθημα Δίου παιδός, οὓς Ἡρακλέης
Ἀμαζόνων σκυλεύματ' ἤνεγκεν θεῷ.
ἐνῆν δ' ὑφανταὶ γράμμασιν τοιαίδ' ὑφαί·
Οὐρανὸς ἀθροίζων ἄστρ' ἐν αἰθέρος κύκλῳ·
ἵππους μὲν ἤλαυν' εἰς τελευταίαν φλόγα
Ἥλιος, ἐφέλκων λαμπρὸν Ἑσπέρου φάος.
μελάμπεπλος δὲ Νὺξ ἀσείρωτον ζυγοῖς
ὄχημ' ἔπαλλεν· ἄστρα δ' ὡμάρτει θεᾷ.
Πλειὰς μὲν ᾔει μεσοπόρου δι' αἰθέρος,

SERVANT

Soon as Creusa's lord had left the fane
Of Phoebus, taking his new son with him
For that thanksgiving-feast and sacrifice,
Xuthus went up to where the Wine-god's fire
Leaps heavenward, to make wet with victims' blood
Dionysus' twin rocks for the son new-found;
And spake, "Abide now, son, and set thou up
A wide-embracing tent by craftsmen's toil.
If, sacrificing to the Birth-gods, long
I tarry, feast thy friends assembled there."

So took the calves and went. And now the youth
The unwalled pavilion's compass solemnly
With tall masts reared, with good heed lest the sun
Should dart therein his shafts of midnoon-flame,
Or the slant javelin-gleams of dying day.
A hundred feet he meted out foursquare,—
Having for compass of its space within
Ten thousand, as the cunning craftsmen say,—
As bidding to the feast all Delphi's folk.
With sacred tapestries from the treasuries
He screened it, marvellous for men to see.
First with a canopy of shawls he ceiled it,
The offering of Zeus' son, which Hercules
Brought to the God, the Amazonian spoils.

Therein were webs of woven blazonry:—
Heaven shepherding his stars in folds of air:
His steeds the Sun drave to their goal of fire,
After him drawing the bright Evening Star.
And sable-vestured Night with team of twain
Upfloated; and the stars companioned her.
The Pleiad swam her mid-sky path along,

ὅ τε ξιφήρης Ὠρίων· ὕπερθε δὲ
Ἄρκτος στρέφουσ' οὐραῖα χρυσήρει πόλῳ.
κύκλος δὲ πανσέληνος ἠκόντιζ' ἄνω
μηνὸς διχήρης, Ὑάδες τε ναυτίλοις
σαφέστατον σημεῖον, ἥ τε φωσφόρος
Ἕως διώκουσ' ἄστρα. τοίχοισιν δ' ἔπι
ἤμπισχεν ἄλλα βαρβάρων ὑφάσματα,
εὐηρέτμους ναῦς ἀντίας Ἑλληνίσιν,
καὶ μιξόθηρας φῶτας, ἱππείας τ' ἄγρας,
ἐλάφων λεόντων τ' ἀγρίων θηράματα.
κατ' εἰσόδους δὲ Κέκροπα θυγατέρων πέλας
σπείραισιν εἱλίσσοντ', Ἀθηναίων τινὸς
ἀνάθημα· χρυσέους τ' ἐν μέσῳ συσσιτίῳ
κρατῆρας ἔστησ'. ἐν δ' ἄκροισι βὰς ποσὶ
κῆρυξ ἀνεῖπε τὸν θέλοντ' ἐγχωρίων
ἐς δαῖτα χωρεῖν. ὡς δ' ἐπληρώθη στέγη,
στεφάνοισι κοσμηθέντες εὐόχθου βορᾶς
ψυχὴν ἐπλήρουν. ὡς δ' ἀνεῖσαν ἡδονήν,
σκηνῆς[1] παρελθὼν πρέσβυς εἰς μέσον πέδον
ἔστη, γέλων δ' ἔθηκε συνδείπνοις πολύν,
πρόθυμα πράσσων· ἔκ τε γὰρ κρωσσῶν ὕδωρ
χεροῖν ἔπεμπε νίπτρα, κἀξεθυμία
σμύρνης ἱδρῶτα, χρυσέων τ' ἐκπωμάτων
ἦρχ', αὐτὸς αὑτῷ τόνδε προστάξας πόνον.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἐς αὐλοὺς ἧκον ἐς κρατῆρά τε
κοινόν, γέρων ἔλεξ'· ἀφαρπάζειν χρεὼν
οἰνηρὰ τεύχη σμικρά, μεγάλα δ' εἰσφέρειν,
ὡς θᾶσσον ἔλθωσ' οἵδ' ἐς ἡδονὰς φρενῶν.
ἦν δὴ φερόντων μόχθος ἀργυρηλάτους
χρυσέας τε φιάλας· ὁ δὲ λαβὼν ἐξαίρετον,
ὡς τῷ νέῳ δὴ δεσπότῃ χάριν φέρων,

[1] Barnes: to supply lacuna in MSS.

And sword-begirt Orion; and, above, [sphere.
The Bear's tail wheeled around the gold-gemmed
The Moon's full circle of the parted month
Shot silver shafts: the Hyads, surest sign
To shipmen; and the Light-uplifter, Dawn,
Chasing the star-rout. And upon the walls
Draped he yet other orient tapestries:
Galleys with oars that charged on ships of Greece,
Monsters half-brute, steeds flying in the chase,
Huntings of stags and lions of the wold.
At the doors Cecrops coiling spire on spire
Amidst his daughters—some Athenian's gift
Of worship. In the banquet's midst he set
The golden bowls. Forth stately pacing then
A herald cried, "What Delphian will soe'er,
Come to the feast!" And when the tent was thronged,
With garlands crowned they satisfied their souls
With plenteous meat. And when they would no more,
An old man entered in, and in their midst
Stood, and his busy zeal oft stirred to mirth
The banqueters. He drew from drinking-ewers
Water for cleansing hands; for incense burnt
Balsam of myrrh, and of the golden cups
Took charge—yea, laid this office on himself.
But when the flutes 'gan play, and mazer-bowls
Were mixed, the greybeard spake, "Take hence forthright
These tiny wine-cups—ample beakers bring,
That my lords' hearts the sooner may be merry."
Then toiled we bearing goblets silver-chased
And golden; and he took a chosen one,
As rendering worship to his new-made lord,

ἔδωκε πλῆρες τεῦχος, εἰς οἶνον βαλὼν
ὅ φασι δοῦναι φάρμακον δραστήριον
δέσποιναν, ὡς παῖς ὁ νέος ἐκλίποι φάος·
κοὐδεὶς τάδ' ᾔδειν· ἐν χεροῖν ἔχοντι δὲ
σπονδὰς μετ' ἄλλων παιδὶ τῷ πεφηνότι
βλασφημίαν τις οἰκετῶν ἐφθέγξατο·
ὁ δ', ὡς ἐν ἱερῷ μάντεσίν τ' ἐσθλοῖς τραφείς,
οἰωνὸν ἔθετο, κἀκέλευσ' ἄλλον νέον
κρατῆρα πληροῦν· τὰς δὲ πρὶν σπονδὰς θεοῦ
δίδωσι γαίᾳ, πᾶσί τ' ἐκσπένδειν λέγει.
σιγὴ δ' ὑπῆλθεν. ἐκ δ' ἐπίμπλαμεν δρόσου
κρατῆρας ἱεροὺς Βυβλίνου τε πώματος.
κἀν τῷδε μόχθῳ πτηνὸς εἰσπίπτει δόμους
κῶμος πελειῶν· Λοξίου γὰρ ἐν δόμοις
ἄτρεστα ναίουσ'· ὡς δ' ἀπέσπεισαν μέθυ,
εἰς αὐτὸ χείλη πώματος κεχρημέναι
καθεῖσαν, εἷλκον δ' εὐπτέρους ἐς αὐχένας.
καὶ ταῖς μὲν ἄλλαις ἄνοσος ἦν λοιβὴ θεοῦ·
ἣ δ' ἕζετ' ἔνθ' ὁ καινὸς ἔσπεισεν γόνος,
ποτοῦ τ' ἐγεύσατ', εὐθὺς εὔπτερον δέμας
ἔσεισε κἀβάκχευσεν, ἐκ δ' ἔκλαγξ' ὄπα
ἀξύνετον αἰάζουσ'· ἐθάμβησεν δὲ πᾶς
θοινατόρων ὅμιλος ὄρνιθος πόνους·
θνῄσκει δ' ἀπασπαίρουσα, φοινικοσκελεῖς
χηλὰς παρεῖσα. γυμνὰ δ' ἐκ πέπλων μέλη
ὑπὲρ τραπέζης ἦχ' ὁ μαντευτὸς γόνος,
βοᾷ δέ· τίς μ' ἔμελλεν ἀνθρώπων κτανεῖν;
σήμαινε, πρέσβυ· σὴ γὰρ ἡ προθυμία,
καὶ πῶμα χειρὸς σῆς ἐδεξάμην πάρα.
εὐθὺς δ' ἐρευνᾷ γραῖαν ὠλένην λαβών,
ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ πρέσβυν ὡς ἔχονθ' ἕλοι.

And gave the chalice brimmed, first casting in
The drug death-working, which our mistress gave,
Men say, that her new son might leave the light.
None marked;—but as the god-discovered heir
Raised with the rest the God's cup in his hand,
He heard some servant speak a word unmeet.
He, temple-reared, perfect in bodement-lore,
Held it for ominous, bade fill up with wine
Another bowl; that first drink-offering
He cast to earth, and bade all do the like.
Then fell a hush. With water brimmed we up
And Bybline wine the sacred mixing-bowls.

Then midst our toils a flight of doves dropt down
In the pavilion; for in Loxias' halls
Unfrayed they dwell, and when men spilled the wine,
The thirsty innocents dipped their beaks therein,
And drew it down their dainty-feathered throats.
And none the God's libation harmed—save one,
Which lighted where the new heir spilled the wine.
She sipped the drink—her dainty-feathered frame
Quivered and staggered: an unmeaning scream [1]
She shrilled of anguish: marvelled all the throng
Of banqueters to see her agonies.
One fierce convulsion—the pink claws uncramped;
And she was dead. That child of prophecy
Bared of his cloak his limbs, leapt o'er the board,
Shouting "Who goeth about to murder me?
Old man, declare!—thine was the eager zeal,—
Yea, from thine hand did I receive the cup!"
He clutched his withered arm, he searched him o'er
To take the ancient in the very fact.

[1] The ordinary note of the bird was significant in augury.

ὤφθη δὲ καὶ κατεῖπ' ἀναγκασθεὶς μόγις
τόλμας Κρεούσης πώματός τε μηχανάς.
θεῖ δ' εὐθὺς ἔξω συλλαβὼν θοινάτορας
ὁ πυθόχρηστος Λοξίου νεανίας,
κἀν κοιράνοισι Πυθικοῖς σταθεὶς λέγει·
ὦ γαῖα σεμνή, τῆς Ἐρεχθέως ὕπο
ξένης γυναικὸς φαρμάκοισι θνῄσκομεν.
Δελφῶν δ' ἄνακτες ὥρισαν πετρορριφῆ
θανεῖν ἐμὴν δέσποιναν οὐ ψήφῳ μιᾷ,
τὸν ἱερὸν ὡς κτείνουσαν ἔν τ' ἀνακτόροις
φόνον τιθεῖσαν. πᾶσα δὲ ζητεῖ πόλις
τὴν ἀθλίως σπεύσασαν ἀθλίαν ὁδόν·
παίδων γὰρ ἐλθοῦσ' εἰς ἔρον Φοῖβον πάρα,
τὸ σῶμα κοινῇ τοῖς τέκνοις ἀπώλεσεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστ' οὐκ ἔστιν θανάτου
παρατροπὰ μελέᾳ μοι·
φανερὰ γὰρ φανερὰ τάδ' ἤδη
σπονδᾶς ἐκ Διονύσου
βοτρύων θοᾶς ἐχίδνας
σταγόσι μιγνυμένας φόνῳ,
φανερὰ θύματα νερτέρων,
συμφοραὶ μὲν ἐμῷ βίῳ,
λεύσιμοι δὲ καταφθοραὶ δεσποίνᾳ.
τίνα φυγὰν πτερόεσσαν ἢ
χθονὸς ὑπὸ σκοτίων μυχῶν
πορευθῶ, θανάτου λεύσιμον ἄταν
ἀποφεύγουσα, τεθρίππων
ὠκίσταν χαλὰν ἐπιβᾶσ',
ἢ πρύμνας ἐπὶ ναῶν;
οὐκ ἔστι λαθεῖν, ὅτε μὴ χρῄζων
θεὸς ἐκκλέπτει.

Detected, tortured, scarce even then he told
Creusa's desperate deed, the poison-plot.
Straightway, the feasters with him, hurries forth
The stripling given by Loxias' oracle,
Before the Pythian nobles stands, and cries,
"O hallowed land, by poison is my death
Sought of Erechtheus' child, the alien dame!"
Then Delphi's lords by general vote decreed
That from the precipice hurled my queen should die,
As compassing a priest's death, planning murder
Within the precinct. All the city seeks her
Who sped on wretched mission wretchedly.
Drawn by desire of babes to Phoebus' fane,
She hath lost her life and children therewithal.

CHORUS

There is no hiding-place from death for me,
None: woe is me, it is the end!
All is laid bare for all men's eyes to see—
The cup, the murder-blend
Of gouts of viper-blood swift for life's quelling,
Mid Bacchus' clusters shed;
Drink-offering—yea, to them in darkness dwelling,
Gods of the dead.

Ruin is my life's portion—ah, *her* doom!
Stones raining death upon my queen!
Oh had I wings, or could but plunge to gloom
Under the earth, to screen
Mine head from horror of the stones down-beating!
Oh, borne on four-horsed car,
To hear the hurrying hoofs!—to see waves fleeting
Astern afar!

There is no hope,—except a God befriending
Should snatch us from men's sight.

τί ποτ', ὦ μελέα δέσποινα, μένει
ψυχῇ σε παθεῖν; ἆρα θέλουσαι
δρᾶσαί τι κακὸν τοὺς πέλας αὐταὶ
πεισόμεθ', ὥσπερ τὸ δίκαιον;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πρόσπολοι, διωκόμεσθα θανασίμους ἐπὶ σφαγάς,
Πυθίᾳ ψήφῳ κρατηθεῖσ', ἔκδοτος δὲ γίγνομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴσμεν, ὦ τάλαινα, τὰς σὰς συμφοράς, ἵν' εἶ
τύχης.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ποῖ φύγω δῆτ'; ἐκ γὰρ οἴκων προύλαβον μόγις
πόδα,
μὴ θανεῖν· κλοπῇ δ' ἀφῖγμαι διαφυγοῦσα πολε-
μίους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῖ δ' ἂν ἄλλοσ' ἢ 'πὶ βωμόν;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ τί μοι πλέον τόδε;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἱκέτιν οὐ θέμις φονεύειν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τῷ νόμῳ δέ γ' ὄλλυμαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χειρία γ' ἁλοῦσα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ μὴν οἵδ' ἀγωνισταὶ πικροὶ
δεῦρ' ἐπείγονται ξιφήρεις.

O hapless queen, upon thy life what ending
Of agony shall light!
O God! is justice' sword on *us* descending,
Who thought to smite?

Enter CREUSA *in haste.*

CREUSA

Maidens, I am chased: the blood-hounds are upon my track to slay;
For the Pythian vote hath doomed me, given me up to be their prey!

CHORUS

Hapless queen, we know it, know the ruin overshadowing thee.

CREUSA

Whither fly? What refuge? Scarce from forth the house my feet could flee
Ere the death rushed in. Through throngs of foemen slipt I stealthily.

CHORUS

What thy refuge save the altar?

CREUSA

How shall this avail my need?

CHORUS

Impious 'tis to slay the suppliant.

CREUSA

Yet the law my death decreed.

CHORUS

Ay, but first their hands must hold thee.

CREUSA

Lo, the swords!—they come, the feet
Of the ministers of death!

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἵζε νυν πυρᾶς ἔπι.
ἢν θάνῃς γὰρ ἐνθάδ' οὖσα, τοῖς ἀποκτείνασί σε
προστρόπαιον αἷμα θήσεις· οἰστέον δὲ τὴν τύχην.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ ταυρόμορφον ὄμμα Κηφισοῦ πατρός,
οἵαν ἔχιδναν τήνδ' ἔφυσας ἢ πυρὸς
δράκοντ' ἀναβλέποντα φοινίαν φλόγα,
ᾗ τόλμα πᾶσ' ἔνεστιν, οὐδ' ἥσσων ἔφυ
Γοργοῦς σταλαγμῶν, οἷς ἔμελλέ με κτανεῖν.
λάζυσθ', ἵν' αὐτῆς τοὺς ἀκηράτους πλόκους
κόμης καταξήνωσι Παρνασοῦ πλάκες,
ὅθεν πετραῖον ἅλμα δισκηθήσεται.
ἐσθλοῦ δ' ἔκυρσα δαίμονος, πρὶν ἐς πόλιν
μολεῖν Ἀθηνῶν χὐπὸ μητρυιὰν πεσεῖν.
ἐν συμμάχοις γὰρ ἀνεμετρησάμην φρένας
τὰς σάς, ὅσον μοι πῆμα δυσμενής τ' ἔφυς·
εἴσω γὰρ ἄν με περιβαλοῦσα δικτύων
ἄρδην ἂν ἐξέπεμψας εἰς Ἅιδου δόμους.
ἀλλ' οὔτε βωμὸς οὔτ' Ἀπόλλωνος δόμος
σώσει σ'. ὁ δ' οἶκτος ὁ σὸς ἐμοὶ κρείσσων πάρα
καὶ μητρὶ τἠμῇ· καὶ γὰρ εἰ τὸ σῶμά μοι
ἄπεστιν αὐτῆς, τοὔνομ' οὐκ ἄπεστί πω.
ἴδεσθε τὴν πανοῦργον, ἐκ τέχνης τέχνην
οἵαν ἔπλεξε· βωμὸν ἔπτηξεν θεοῦ,
ὡς οὐ δίκην δώσουσα τῶν εἰργασμένων.

CHORUS

Upon the altar take thy seat;
For, if here they slay thee, shall thy blood to heaven
for vengeance call
On the murderers.

[CREUSA *seats herself on the altar, grasping it with her hands.*

So:—and now to bear what fate soe'er befall.

Enter ION *with armed men followed by a crowd.*

ION

O form bull-shapen of her sire Cephisus,[1]
What viper of thy blood is this, or what
Dragon up-glaring murderous flame of fire!
Full of all hardihood, not less fell she is
Than Gorgon's blood, wherewith she sought my [death.
Seize her!—Parnassus' jagged terraces
Shall card the dainty tresses of her hair,
When quoitwise down the rocks she shall be hurled.
O grace of fortune, ere to Athens town
I came, and fell beneath a stepdame's power,
Begirt with friends I sounded thy soul's depths,
Knew thee my bane, and measured all thine hate!
For, had thy nets ensnared me in thine home,
Me with one fling thou hadst hurled to Hades' halls.
Nay—not the altar, not Apollo's house
Shall save thee! Ruth for thee!—rather for me
And for my mother:—though she be afar
In body, ever her name is in mine heart.
See her, vile monster! Webs on webs of guile
She weaves! At Phoebus' altar hath she crouched,
As though she should not suffer for her deeds!

Beckons to the guards, who advance irresolutely.

[1] Praxithea, Creusa's mother, was grand-daughter of this River-god.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀπεννέπω σε μὴ κατακτείνειν ἐμὲ
ὑπέρ τ' ἐμαυτῆς τοῦ θεοῦ θ' ἵν' ἕσταμεν.

ΙΩΝ

τί δ' ἐστὶ Φοίβῳ σοί τε κοινὸν ἐν μέσῳ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἱερὸν τὸ σῶμα τῷ θεῷ δίδωμ' ἔχειν.

ΙΩΝ

κᾆτ' ἔκτανες σὺ φαρμάκοις τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀλλ' οὐκέτ' ἦσθα Λοξίου, πατρὸς δὲ σοῦ.

ΙΩΝ

ἀλλ' ἐγενόμεσθα, πατρὸς ἀπουσίαν[1] λέγω.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὔκουν τότ' ἦσθα; νῦν δ' ἐγώ, σὺ δ' οὐκέτ' εἶ.

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ εὐσεβής γε· τἀμὰ δ' εὐσεβῆ τότ' ἦν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔκτεινά σ' ὄντα πολέμιον δόμοις ἐμοῖς.

ΙΩΝ

οὔτοι σὺν ὅπλοις ἦλθον εἰς τὴν σὴν χθόνα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

μάλιστα· κἀπίμπρας γ' Ἐρεχθέως δόμους.

ΙΩΝ

ποίοισι πανοῖς ἢ πυρὸς ποίᾳ φλογί;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔμελλες οἰκεῖν τἄμ', ἐμοῦ βίᾳ λαβών.

ΙΩΝ

πατρός γε γῆν διδόντος ἣν ἐκτήσατο.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τοῖς Αἰόλου δὲ πῶς μετῆν τῆς Παλλάδος;

[1] Seidler: for δ' οὐσίαν of MSS.

CREUSA

I warn thee, slay me not—for mine own sake,
And the God's sake, upon whose floor we stand!

ION

Phoebus—and thou? What part hast thou in Phoebus?

CREUSA

Myself I give to the God, a sacred thing.

ION

Thou sacred?—who didst poison the God's child!

CREUSA

Thou Loxias' child!—his never, but thy sire's.

ION

His I became while father I had none.

CREUSA

Ay, then:—now, I am his, thou his no more.

ION

Blasphemer!—his? His reverent child was I.

CREUSA

I did but seek to slay mine house's foe.

ION

I came not sword in hand against thy land.

CREUSA

No?—Thou wouldst set Erechtheus' halls aflame.

ION

Yea? With what brands or with what flame of fire?

CREUSA

In mine house wouldst thou dwell, take mine by force.

ION

Take?—my sire *gives* the land that he hath won.

CREUSA

What part have Aeolus' sons in Pallas' land?

ΙΩΝ
ὅπλοισιν αὐτήν, οὐ λόγοις ἐρρύσατο.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ἐπίκουρος οἰκήτωρ γ' ἂν οὐκ εἴη χθονός.

ΙΩΝ
κᾆπειτα τοῦ μέλλειν μ' ἀπέκτεινες φόβῳ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ὡς μὴ θάνοιμί γ', εἰ σὺ μὴ μέλλων τύχοις.

ΙΩΝ
φθονεῖς ἄπαις οὖσ', εἰ πατὴρ ἐξηῦρέ με.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
σὺ τῶν ἀτέκνων δῆτ' ἀναρπάσεις δόμους;

ΙΩΝ
ἡμῖν δέ γ' ἀλλὰ πατρικῆς οὐκ ἦν μέρος;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ὅσ' ἀσπὶς ἔγχος θ'· ἥδε σοὶ παμπησία.

ΙΩΝ
ἔκλειπε βωμὸν καὶ θεηλάτους ἕδρας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
τὴν σὴν ὅπου σοι μητέρ' ἐστὶ νουθέτει.

ΙΩΝ
σὺ δ' οὐχ ὑφέξεις ζημίαν, κτείνουσ' ἐμέ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ἤν γ' ἐντὸς ἀδύτων τῶνδέ με σφάξαι θέλῃς.

ΙΩΝ
τίς ἡδονή σοι θεοῦ θανεῖν ἐν στέμμασι;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
λυπήσομέν τιν', ὧν λελυπήμεσθ' ὕπο.

ΙΩΝ
φεῦ.
δεινόν γε, θνητοῖς τοὺς νόμους ὡς οὐ καλῶς
ἔθηκεν ὁ θεὸς οὐδ' ἀπὸ γνώμης σοφῆς·

ION

He was her saviour—and with arms, not words.

CREUSA

Should allies in possession take the land!

ION

Fearing what *might* await thee, thou wouldst slay me?

CREUSA

Ay, lest thou haply wait not, but slay me!

ION

Childless, dost grudge my father finding me?

CREUSA

What, shalt thou seize all childless parents' homes?

ION

Had I no part at least in my sire's wealth?

CREUSA

His wealth!—a shield and spear. Take that thine is.

ION

Hence!—leave the altar and the hallowed seat!

CREUSA

Lesson thy mother, wheresoe'er she be.

ION

Shalt thou not suffer, who wouldst murder me?

CREUSA

Yea—if thou dare to slay me mid the shrines.

ION

What joy hast thou mid Phoebus' wreaths to die?

CREUSA

So shall I trouble Him who troubled me.

ION

Out upon this!
Shame, that a God ordained unrighteous laws
For mortals, statutes not in wisdom framed!

τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀδίκους βωμὸν οὐχ ἵζειν ἐχρῆν,
ἀλλ' ἐξελαύνειν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ψαύειν καλὸν
θεῶν πονηρὰν χεῖρα· τοῖσι δ' ἐνδίκοις
ἱερὰ καθίζειν, ὅστις ἠδικεῖτ', ἐχρῆν,
καὶ μὴ 'πὶ ταὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἰόντ' ἔχειν ἴσον
τόν τ' ἐσθλὸν ὄντα τόν τε μὴ θεῶν πάρα.

ΠΥΘΙΑ

ἐπίσχες, ὦ παῖ· τρίποδα γὰρ χρηστήριον
λιποῦσα θριγκοῦ τοῦδ' ὑπερβάλλω πόδα
Φοίβου προφῆτις, τρίποδος ἀρχαῖον νόμον
σῴζουσα, πασῶν Δελφίδων ἐξαίρετος.

ΙΩΝ

χαῖρ', ὦ φίλη μοι μῆτερ, οὐ τεκοῦσά περ.

ΠΥΘΙΑ

ἀλλ' οὖν ἐλεγόμεσθ'· ἡ φάτις δ' οὔ μοι πικρά.

ΙΩΝ

ἤκουσας ὥς μ' ἔκτεινεν ἥδε μηχαναῖς ;

ΠΥΘΙΑ

ἤκουσα· καὶ σύ γ' ὠμὸς ὢν ἁμαρτάνεις.

ΙΩΝ

οὐ χρή με τοὺς κτείνοντας ἀνταπολλύναι ;

ΠΥΘΙΑ

προγονοῖς δάμαρτες δυσμενεῖς ἀεί ποτε.

ΙΩΝ

ἡμεῖς δὲ μητρυιαῖς γε πάσχοντες κακῶς.

ΠΥΘΙΑ

μὴ ταῦτα· λείπων ἱερὰ καὶ στείχων πάτραν—

ΙΩΝ

τί δή με δρᾶσαι νουθετούμενον χρεών ;

Never should crime have altar-sanctuary,
But hounding thence. Unmeet it is that hands
Sin-stained should touch the Gods: but righteous men,
Whoso is wronged, should claim their sanctuary,
And not the good and evil come alike
Hither to win the same boon of the Gods.

Enter the PYTHIA, *bearing a cradle, the contents of which are concealed by a wrapping which partially envelopes it.*

PYTHIA

Forbear, my son. The seat of prophecy
I leave, and step across this temple-fence,
Priestess of Phoebus, chosen of Delphi's daughters
To guard his tripod's immemorial use.

ION

Hail, dear my mother, though thou didst not bear me.

PYTHIA

So was I called; nor did the name mislike me.

ION

Hast heard of yonder woman's plot to slay me?

PYTHIA

I heard: yet is thy ruthlessness all wrong.

ION

Shall I not pay death-wage to murderers?

PYTHIA

To stepsons from of old have wives been foes.

ION

Yea, I withal of stepdames have foul wrong.

PYTHIA

Ah hush! Thou leav'st the fane, thou farest hóme—

ION

What must I do then at thy counselling?

ΠΥΘΙΑ
καθαρὸς Ἀθήνας ἔλθ' ὑπ' οἰωνῶν καλῶν.

ΙΩΝ
καθαρὸς ἅπας τοι πολεμίους ὃς ἂν κτάνῃ.

ΠΥΘΙΑ
μὴ σύ γε· παρ' ἡμῶν δ' ἔκλαβ' οὓς ἔχω λόγους.

ΙΩΝ
λέγοις ἄν· εὔνους δ' οὖσ' ἐρεῖς ὅσ' ἂν λέγῃς.

ΠΥΘΙΑ
ὁρᾷς τόδ' ἄγγος χερὸς ὑπ' ἀγκάλαις ἐμαῖς ;

ΙΩΝ
ὁρῶ παλαιὰν ἀντίπηγ' ἐν στέμμασιν.

ΠΥΘΙΑ
ἐν τῇδέ σ' ἔλαβον νεόγονον βρέφος ποτέ.

ΙΩΝ
τί φής ; ὁ μῦθος εἰσενήνεκται νέος.

ΠΥΘΙΑ
σιγῇ γὰρ εἶχον αὐτά· νῦν δὲ δείκνυμεν.

ΙΩΝ
πῶς οὖν ἔκρυπτες τόδε λαβοῦσ' ἡμᾶς πάλαι ;

ΠΥΘΙΑ
ὁ θεός σ' ἐβούλετ' ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν λάτριν.

ΙΩΝ
νῦν δ' οὐχὶ χρῄζει ; τῷ τόδε γνῶναί με χρή ;

ΠΥΘΙΑ
πατέρα κατειπὼν τῆσδέ σ' ἐκπέμπει χθονός.

ΙΩΝ
σὺ δ' ἐκ κελευσμῶν ἢ πόθεν σῴζεις τάδε ;

ΠΥΘΙΑ
ἐνθύμιόν μοι τότε τίθησι Λοξίας—

ΙΩΝ
τί χρῆμα δρᾶσαι ; λέγε, πέραινε σοὺς λόγους.

PYTHIA

With clean hands and fair omens go to Athens.

ION

Clean are the hands of whoso slays his foes.

PYTHIA

Nay, nay !—but hear the tale I bring to thee.

ION

Speak : it shall come of love, whate'er thou say.

PYTHIA

Seest thou this chest here cradled in mine arms ?

ION

I see an ancient ark with fillets dight.

PYTHIA

In this I found thee once, a new-born babe.

ION

What say'st thou ? Strange the story hither brought !

PYTHIA

Yea, I kept silence. I reveal it now.

ION

Why hide from me so long this found of thee ?

PYTHIA

The God would have thee minister in his house.

ION

Nor needeth now ? How shall I know it so ?

PYTHIA

Showing thy sire, he sends thee forth the land.

ION

Thou, by commandment keptest thou these things ?

PYTHIA

On that day Loxias put it in mine heart—

ION

To do what deed ? Say on, tell out the tale.

ΠΥΘΙΑ

σῶσαι τόδ᾽ εὕρημ᾽ εἰς τὸν ὄντα νῦν χρόνον.

ΙΩΝ

ἔχει δέ μοι τί κέρδος ἢ τίνα βλάβην ;

ΠΥΘΙΑ

ἐνθάδε κέκρυπται σπάργαν᾽ οἷς ἐνῆσθα σύ.

ΙΩΝ

μητρὸς τάδ᾽ ἡμῖν ἐκφέρεις ζητήματα ;

ΠΥΘΙΑ

ἐπεί γ᾽ ὁ δαίμων βούλεται· πάροιθε δ᾽ οὔ.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ μακαρίων μοι φασμάτων ἥδ᾽ ἡμέρα.

ΠΥΘΙΑ

λαβών νυν αὐτὰ τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἐκπόνει.

ΙΩΝ

πᾶσαν δ᾽ ἐπελθὼν Ἀσιάδ᾽ Εὐρώπης θ᾽ ὅρους ;

ΠΥΘΙΑ

γνώσει τάδ᾽ αὐτός. τοῦ θεοῦ δ᾽ ἕκατί σε
ἔθρεψά τ᾽, ὦ παῖ, καὶ τάδ᾽ ἀποδίδωμί σοι,
ἃ κεῖνος ἀκέλευστόν μ᾽ ἐβουλήθη λαβεῖν
σῶσαί θ᾽· ὅτου δέ γ᾽ εἵνεκ᾽, οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν.
ᾔδει δὲ θνητῶν οὔτις ἀνθρώπων τάδε
ἔχοντας ἡμᾶς, οὐδ᾽ ἵν᾽ ἦν κεκρυμμένα.
καὶ χαῖρ᾽· ἴσον γάρ σ᾽ ὡς τεκοῦσ᾽ ἀσπάζομαι.
ἄρξαι δ᾽ ὅθεν σὴν μητέρα ζητεῖν σε χρή·
πρῶτον μὲν εἴ τις Δελφίδων τεκοῦσά σε
εἰς τούσδε ναοὺς ἐξέθηκε παρθένος,
ἔπειτα δ᾽ εἴ τις Ἑλλάς· ἐξ ἡμῶν δ᾽ ἔχεις
ἅπαντα Φοίβου θ᾽, ὃς μετέσχε τῆς τύχης.

PYTHIA

To keep this treasure-trove against this hour.

ION

What profit or what hurt hath this for me?

PYTHIA

This hides the swaddling-bands that wrapped thee then.

ION

My mother!—clues be these for finding her?

PYTHIA

Yea, 'tis the God's will now—not heretofore.

ION

O day of blessed revelations this!

PYTHIA

Take them—rest not until thou find thy mother.

ION

How?—search all Asia through, search Europe's bounds?

PYTHIA

Thou shalt not err, thou. For the God's own sake
I nursed thee, boy: these give I back to thee,
Which his unspoken will then made me take
And guard. Why thus he willed I cannot tell:
But none of mortal men was ware that I
Had these, nor hidden in what place they lay.
Farewell . . . . for as a mother kiss I thee.

Turns to go, but resumes—

Where thou shouldst seek thy mother, there begin—
First, did a Delphian bride unwedded bear
And cast thee forth upon these temple-steps?
Then, any maid of Greece? . . . So hast thou all
Of me, and Phoebus, partner in thy fortune. [*Exit.*

ΙΩΝ

φεῦ φεῦ· κατ' ὅσσων ὡς ὑγρὸν βάλλω δάκρυ,
ἐκεῖσε τὸν νοῦν δούς, ὅθ' ἡ τεκοῦσά με
κρυφαῖα νυμφευθεῖσ' ἀπημπόλα λάθρᾳ
καὶ μαστὸν οὐχ ὑπέσχεν· ἀλλ' ἀνώνυμος
ἐν θεοῦ μελάθροις εἶχον οἰκέτην βίον.
τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ μὲν χρηστά, τοῦ δὲ δαίμονος
βαρέα· χρόνον γὰρ ὅν μ' ἐχρῆν ἐν ἀγκάλαις
μητρὸς τρυφῆσαι καί τι τερφθῆναι βίου,
ἀπεστερήθην φιλτάτης μητρὸς τροφῆς.
τλήμων δε χἠ τεκοῦσά μ', ὡς ταὐτὸν πάθος
πέπονθε, παιδὸς ἀπολέσασα χαρμονάς.
καὶ νῦν λαβὼν τήνδ' ἀντίπηγ' οἴσω θεῷ
ἀνάθημ', ἵν' εὕρω μηδὲν ὧν οὐ βούλομαι.
εἰ γάρ με δούλη τυγχάνει τεκοῦσά τις,
εὑρεῖν κάκιον μητέρ' ἢ σιγῶντ' ἐᾶν.
ὦ Φοῖβε, ναοῖς ἀνατίθημι τήνδε σοῖς.
καίτοι τί πάσχω; τοῦ θεοῦ προθυμίᾳ
πολεμῶ, τὰ μητρὸς σύμβολ' ὃς σέσωκέ μοι.
ἀνοικτέον τάδ' ἐστὶ καὶ τολμητέον.
τὰ γὰρ πεπρωμέν' οὐχ ὑπερβαίην ποτ' ἄν.
ὦ στέμμαθ' ἱερά, τί ποτέ μοι κεκεύθατε,
καὶ σύνδεθ', οἷσι τἄμ' ἐφρουρήθη φίλα;
ἰδοὺ περίπτυγμ' ἀντίπηγος εὐκύκλου,
ὡς οὐ γεγήρακ' ἔκ τινος θεηλάτου,
εὐρώς τ' ἄπεστι πλεγμάτων· ὁ δ' ἐν μέσῳ
χρόνος πολὺς δὴ τοῖσδε θησαυρίσμασιν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί δῆτα φάσμα τῶν ἀνελπίστων ὁρῶ;

ΙΩΝ

σίγα σύ· πολλὰ καὶ πάροιθεν οἶσθά μοι.

ION

Ah me, mine eyes are drowned in streaming tears,
As leaps my thought to that day when the bride
Betrayed, who bare, by stealth to thraldom sold me,
Nor ever suckled me: but nameless all
In the God's court I lived a servant's life.
Kind was the God's part, but my fortune's hand
Heavy; for while I should of right have lain
Soft in a mother's arms, and known life's joy,
Of a sweet mother's care was I bereft.

O hapless she who bare me, who hath suffered
Like me, hath lost the joys of motherhood!
But this ark will I bear unto the God;
An offering—lest I find aught I would not.
For, if perchance a slave-girl gave me birth,
'Twere worse to find a mother than let be.
Phoebus, I offer this unto thy fane . . .
What ails me? Lo, I fight against the favour
Of Him who saved for me my mother's tokens!
This must I open, face what must be faced;
For never can I overstep my doom.

Ah, sacred fillets, what have ye hid for me,
O bands wherein mine heart's desire was kept?
Lo, the enwrapping of the ark's fair curve,
How by a miracle it waxed not old;
The osier-plaitings mouldless!—yet long time
Since then hath o'er these treasure-relics passed.

CREUSA

What, O what vision see I, past all hope!

ION

Peace!—for thou canst be silent—as the grave.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκ ἐν σιωπῇ τἀμά· μή με νουθέτει.
ὁρῶ γὰρ ἄγγος οὑξέθηκ᾽ ἐγώ ποτε
σέ γ᾽, ὦ τέκνον μοι, βρέφος ἔτ᾽ ὄντα νήπιον,
Κέκροπος ἐς ἄντρα καὶ Μακρὰς πετρηρεφεῖς.
λείψω δὲ βωμὸν τόνδε, κεἰ θανεῖν με χρή.

ΙΩΝ

λάζυσθε τήνδε· θεομανὴς γὰρ ἥλατο
βωμοῦ λιποῦσα ξόανα· δεῖτε δ᾽ ὠλένας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σφάζοντες οὐ λήγοιτ᾽ ἄν· ὡς ἀνθέξομαι
καὶ τῆσδε καὶ σοῦ τῶν τε σῶν κεκρυμμένων.

ΙΩΝ

τάδ᾽ οὐχὶ δεινά; ῥυσιάζομαι λόγῳ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὔκ, ἀλλὰ σοῖς φίλοισιν εὑρίσκει φίλος.

ΙΩΝ

ἐγὼ φίλος σός; κᾆτά μ᾽ ἔκτεινες λάθρᾳ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

παῖς γ᾽, εἰ τόδ᾽ ἐστὶ τοῖς τεκοῦσι φίλτατον.

ΙΩΝ

παῦσαι πλέκουσα· λήψομαί σ᾽ ἐγὼ καλῶς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἰς τοῦθ᾽ ἱκοίμην, τοῦδε τοξεύω, τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

κενὸν τόδ᾽ ἄγγος ἢ στέγει πλήρωμά τι;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σά γ᾽ ἔνδυθ᾽, οἷσί σ᾽ ἐξέθηκ᾽ ἐγώ ποτε.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ τοὔνομ᾽ αὐτῶν ἐξερεῖς πρὶν εἰσιδεῖν;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κἂν μὴ φράσω γε, κατθανεῖν ὑφίσταμαι.

CREUSA

Not for me silence! Teach not me my part!
I see the ark wherein I set thee forth,—
Thee, O my child, my babbling baby then,—
In Cecrops' cave, beneath the Long Cliff's brow!
This altar will I leave, yea, though I die.
[*Flings her arms round his neck.*

ION

Seize her!—she hath been driven god-distraught
To leave the carven altar! Bind her arms.

CREUSA

Slay on—spare not—for I will cling, will cling
To this, thee, and thy tokens hidden there.

ION

Foul outrage! I am kidnapped by her tongue!

CREUSA

No, no!—but found, O love, of her that loves!

ION

I thy beloved—whom thou wouldst slay by stealth!

CREUSA

Yes—yes! my son! Is aught to parents dearer?

ION

Cease!—I shall take thee mid thy webs of guile.

CREUSA

Take me?—ah take! I strain thereto, my child.

ION

Void is this ark, or somewhat doth it hide?

CREUSA

Yea, that which wrapped thee when I cast thee forth.

ION

Speak out and name them ere thine eyes behold.

CREUSA

Yea, if I tell not, I submit to die.

ΙΩΝ
λέγ'. ὡς ἔχει τι δεινὸν ἡ τόλμη γέ σου.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
σκέψασθ' ὃ παῖς ποτ' οὖσ' ὕφασμ' ὕφην' ἐγώ·
ΙΩΝ
ποῖόν τι; πολλὰ παρθένων ὑφάσματα.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
οὐ τέλεον, οἷον δ' ἐκδίδαγμα κερκίδος.
ΙΩΝ
μορφὴν ἔχον τίν'; ὥς με μὴ ταύτῃ λάβῃς.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
Γοργὼν μὲν ἐν μέσοισιν ἠτρίοις πέπλων.
ΙΩΝ
ὦ Ζεῦ, τίς ἡμᾶς ἐκκυνηγετεῖ πότμος;
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
κεκρασπέδωται δ' ὄφεσιν αἰγίδος τρόπον.
ΙΩΝ
ἰδού.
τόδ' ἔσθ' ὕφασμα· θέσφαθ' ὡς εὑρίσκομεν.
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
ὦ χρόνιον ἱστῶν παρθένευμα τῶν ἐμῶν.
ΙΩΝ
ἔστιν τι πρὸς τῷδ', ἢ μόνῳ τῷδ' εὐτυχεῖς;
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
δράκοντες· ἀρχαῖόν τι παγχρύσῳ γένυι.
δώρημ' Ἀθάνας, ἣ τέκν' ἐντρέφειν λέγει.
Ἐριχθονίου γε τοῦ πάλαι μιμήματα.
ΙΩΝ
τί δρᾶν, τί χρῆσθαι, φράζε μοι, χρυσώματι;
ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ
δέραια παιδὶ νεογόνῳ φέρειν, τέκνον,

ION

Say on :—'tis passing strange, thy confidence !

CREUSA

See there the web I wove in girlhood's days.

ION

Its fashion ?—girls be ever weaving webs.

CREUSA

No perfect work ; 'twas but a prentice hand.

ION

The pattern tell :—thou shalt not trick me so.

CREUSA

A Gorgon in the mid-threads of a shawl.

ION (*aside*)

O Zeus, what weird is this that dogs our steps ?

CREUSA

'Tis fringed with serpents—with the Aegis-fringe.

ION

Lo, here the web ! (*lifts and spreads it forth.*)
How strangely find we here the oracle !

CREUSA

O work of girlhood's loom, so long unseen !

ION

Is there aught else ?—or this thy one true shot ?

CREUSA

Serpents, an old device, with golden jaws—
Athena's gift, who biddeth deck babes so—
Moulded from Erichthonius' snakes of old.

ION

What use, what purpose, tell me, hath the jewel ?

CREUSA

A necklace for the new-born babe, my child.

ΙΩΝ

ἔνεισιν οἵδε· τὸ δὲ τρίτον ποθῶ μαθεῖν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

στέφανον ἐλαίας ἀμφέθηκά σοι τότε,
ἣν πρῶτ' Ἀθάνα σκόπελον ἐξηνέγκατο,
ὅς, εἴπερ ἔστιν, οὔποτ' ἐκλείπει χλόην,
θάλλει δ' ἐλαίας ἐξ ἀκηράτου γεγώς.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ φιλτάτη μοι μῆτερ, ἄσμενός σ' ἰδὼν
πρὸς ἀσμένης πέπτωκα σὰς παρηίδας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ τέκνον, ὦ φῶς μητρὶ κρεῖσσον ἡλίου—
συγγνώσεται γὰρ ὁ θεός—ἐν χεροῖν σ' ἔχω,
ἄελπτον εὕρημ', ὃν κατὰ γᾶς ἐνέρων
χθόνιον μετὰ Περσεφόνας τ' ἐδόκουν ναίειν.

ΙΩΝ

ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη μοι μῆτερ, ἐν χεροῖν σέθεν
ὁ κατθανών τε κοὐ θανὼν φαντάζομαι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἰὼ ἰώ, λαμπρᾶς αἰθέρος ἀμπτυχαί,
τίν' αὐδὰν ἀύσω,
βοάσω ; πόθεν μοι
συνέκυρσ' ἀδόκητος ἡδονά ; πόθεν
ἐλάβομεν χαράν ;

ΙΩΝ

ἐμοὶ γενέσθαι πάντα μᾶλλον ἄν ποτε,
μῆτερ, παρέστη τῶνδ', ὅπως σός εἰμ' ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔτι φόβῳ τρέμω.

ΙΩΝ

μῶν οὐκ ἔχειν μ' ἔχουσα ;

ION

Even these be here. The third I long to know.

CREUSA

A wreath of olive set I on thee then :
Athena brought it first unto our rock.
If this be there, it hath not lost its green,
But blooms yet, from the sacred olive sprung.

ION

Mother !—dear mother !—glad, O glad, I fall,
Beholding thee, on thy cheeks gladness-flushed.

CREUSA

Child !—light to mother better than the sun—
The God will pardon—I have thee in mine arms,
Unhoped treasure-trove !—as a dweller in Hades, so thought I of thee,
An abider mid nethergloom shades with Persephone.

ION

Ah no, dear mother mine ; within thine arms
Revealed is he that liveth and was dead.

CREUSA

Ho ye, ye unfoldings of ether, ye sunlit expanses,
In what cry shall I peal out my rapture ? O whence unto me
[strange chances
Came it, this sweetness undreamed of ? By what
Such bliss do I see ?

ION

Naught were so strange, but I had looked for that,
O mother, rather than to know me thine.

CREUSA

Still I tremble with dread—

ION

Lest holding thou hold me not ?

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὰς γὰρ ἐλπίδας
ἀπέβαλον πρόσω.
ἰὼ γύναι, πόθεν πόθεν ἔλαβες ἐμὸν
βρέφος ἐς ἀγκάλας ;
τίν' ἀνὰ χέρα δόμους ἔβα Λοξίου ;

ΙΩΝ

θεῖον τόδ'· ἀλλὰ τἀπίλοιπα τῆς τύχης
εὐδαιμονοῖμεν, ὡς τὰ πρόσθε δυστυχῆ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τέκνον, οὐκ ἀδάκρυτος ἐκλοχεύει,
γόοις δὲ ματρὸς ἐκ χερῶν ὁρίζει·
νῦν δὲ γενειάσιν παρὰ σέθεν πνέω
μακαριωτάτας τυχοῦσ' ἡδονᾶς.

ΙΩΝ

τοὐμὸν λέγουσα καὶ τὸ σὸν κοινῶς λέγεις.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄπαιδες οὐκέτ' ἐσμὲν οὐδ' ἄτεκνοι·
δῶμ' ἑστιοῦται, γᾶ δ' ἔχει τυράννους·
ἀνηβᾷ δ' Ἐρεχθεύς,
ὅ τε γηγενέτας δόμος οὐκέτι νύκτα
δέρκεται, ἀελίου δ' ἀναβλέπει λαμπάσιν.

ΙΩΝ

μῆτερ, παρών μοι καὶ πατὴρ μετασχέτω
τῆς ἡδονῆς τῆσδ' ἧς ἔδωχ' ὑμῖν ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ τέκνον, τί φής ; οἷον οἷον ἀνελέγχομαι.

CREUSA

I had seen hope flee
So long agone!
O prophetess, whence and O whence to thine arms
came he,
My little one?
Upborne by what hand unto Loxias' halls was he sped?

ION

A miracle: but through our lot to be
May we be happy as our past was sad.

CREUSA

At thy birth-travail, O my child, was there many a
tear: [many a moan:
Thou wert torn from the arms of thy mother with
And now on thy cheeks is my breath: my darling is
here! [known!
The uttermost bliss of the Blessèd, lo, now have I

ION

Thou speakest for mine heart and thine, as one.

CREUSA

No more are we childless, no more unto barrenness
banned: [kings hath the land.
The home hath the hearth-glow again, and her
The strength of his youth doth Erechtheus renew:
The house of the Earth-born Race no longer to night-
ward shall gaze,
But the sun's beam cleaveth its darkness through.

ION

Mother, my sire is here: let him too share
This happiness which I have given to you.

CREUSA

O child, child, what sayest thou?—must the shame
be laid bare of thy mother?

ΙΩΝ

πῶς εἶπας ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄλλοθεν γέγονας, ἄλλοθεν.

ΙΩΝ

ὤμοι· νόθον με παρθένευμ' ἔτικτε σόν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐχ ὑπὸ λαμπάδων οὐδὲ χορευμάτων
ὑμέναιος ἐμός,
τέκνον, ἔτικτε σὸν κάρα.

ΙΩΝ

αἰαῖ· πέφυκα δυσγενής, μῆτερ, πόθεν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἴστω Γοργοφόνα—

ΙΩΝ

τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἃ σκοπέλοις ἐπ' ἐμοῖς
τὸν ἐλαιοφυῆ πάγον θάσσει—

ΙΩΝ

λέγεις μοι δόλια κοὐ σαφῆ τάδε.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

παρ' ἀηδόνιον πέτραν Φοίβῳ—

ΙΩΝ

τί Φοῖβον αὐδᾷς ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κρυπτόμενον λέχος ηὐνάσθην.

ΙΩΝ

λέγ'· ὡς ἐρεῖς τι κεδνὸν εὐτυχές τε μοι.

ION

What is this thou hast said?

CREUSA

Of another thou camest—oh, of another!

ION

Woe's me! a bastard?—child of maiden's shame?

CREUSA

No torches were gleaming, no raiment outstreaming
In the dance, my child, for the bridal bed
Which brought to the birth thy dear-loved head!

ION

Alas! base-born am I?—O mother, whence?

CREUSA

Be witness the Gorgon-slaying Maid—

ION

What is this?—what meaneth the word thou hast said?

CREUSA

Who hath set on my watch-tower crags her throne
On the hill with her olives overgrown,—

ION

Dark sayings are these, and I cannot interpret the thing.

CREUSA

Unto Phoebus beside the rock where the nightingales sing—

ION

What should of Phoebus by thee be said?

CREUSA

In a bridal from all men hid was I wed.

ION

Say on: glad tidings this and fortune fair!

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

δεκάτῳ δέ σε μηνὸς ἐν
κύκλῳ κρύφιον ὠδῖν' ἔτεκον Φοίβῳ.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ φίλτατ' εἰποῦσ', εἰ λέγεις ἐτήτυμα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

παρθένια δ' ἐμοῦ[1] ματέρος
σπάργαν' ἀμφίβολά σοι τάδ' ἐν-
ῆψα, κερκίδος ἐμᾶς πλάνους.
γάλακτι δ' οὐκ ἐπέσχον, οὐδὲ μαστῷ
τροφεῖα ματρὸς οὐδὲ λουτρὰ χειροῖν,
ἀνὰ δ' ἄντρον ἔρημον οἰωνῶν
γαμφηλαῖς φόνευμα θοίναμά τ' εἰς
Ἅιδαν ἐκβάλλει.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ δεινὰ τλᾶσα μῆτερ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐν φόβῳ καταδεθεῖσα σὰν
ψυχὰν ἀπέβαλον, τέκνον·
ἔκτεινά σ' ἄκουσ'.

ΙΩΝ

ἐξ ἐμοῦ τ' οὐχ ὅσι' ἔθνῃσκες.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἰώ· δειναὶ μὲν τότε τύχαι,
δεινὰ δὲ καὶ τάδ'· ἑλισσόμεσθ' ἐκεῖθεν
ἐνθάδε δυστυχίαισιν
εὐτυχίαις τε πάλιν,
μεθίσταται δὲ πνεύματα.
μενέτω· τὰ πάροιθεν ἅλις κακά· νῦν δ'
ἐγένετό τις οὖρος ἐκ κακῶν, ὦ παῖ.

[1] Barnes: for MSS. ἐμᾶς.

CREUSA

And the months swept round, till the tenth month came,
And I bare unto Phoebus a child of shame.

ION

O happy words, if this thou say'st be true!

CREUSA

And these, these mother's swathing-bands
About thee cast, my maiden hands
Wrought, my loom's skill-less fashionings.
Not to thy lips for suck I gave
The breast, nor with mine hands did lave;
But forth into a lonesome cave,
A banquet-spoil for swooping wings,
To Hades thee thy mother flings.

ION

O mother, what horror to do, to dare!

CREUSA

I was thrall unto terror—I flung away
Thy life, my baby: I steeled me to slay,
When mine heart was moaning "Spare!"

ION

And of me nigh slain!—foul horror it were!

CREUSA

O fearful chances of that dark day,
And of this withal! We are tossed to drift
On the surge of calamity hither and thither:
Yet anon do the winds of heaven shift,
And behold, we are gliding through summer weather!
Oh may it last!—for the ills overpast should surely suffice.
Fair winds, my son, now are wafting us on, after stormy skies.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μηδεὶς δοκείτω μηδὲν ἀνθρώπων ποτὲ
ἄελπτον εἶναι πρὸς τὰ τυγχάνοντα νῦν.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ μεταβαλοῦσα μυρίους ἤδη βροτῶν
καὶ δυστυχῆσαι καὖθις αὖ πρᾶξαι καλῶς,
Τύχη, παρ' οἵαν ἤλθομεν στάθμην βίου,
μητέρα φονεῦσαι καὶ παθεῖν ἀνάξια.
φεῦ·
ἆρ' ἐν φαενναῖς ἡλίου περιπτυχαῖς
ἔνεστι πάντα τάδε καθ' ἡμέραν μαθεῖν;
φίλον μὲν οὖν σ' εὕρημα, μῆτερ, ηὕρομεν,
καὶ τὸ γένος οὐδὲν μεμπτόν, ὡς ἡμῖν, τόδε·
τὰ δ' ἄλλα πρὸς σὲ βούλομαι μόνην φράσαι.
δεῦρ' ἔλθ'· ἐς οὖς σοι τοὺς λόγους εἰπεῖν θέλω
καὶ περικαλύψαι τοῖσι πράγμασι σκότον.
ὅρα σύ, μῆτερ, μὴ σφαλεῖσ' ἃ παρθένοις
ἐγγίγνεται νοσήματ' εἰς κρυπτοὺς γάμους,
ἔπειτα τῷ θεῷ προστίθης τὴν αἰτίαν,
καὶ τοὐμὸν αἰσχρὸν ἀποφυγεῖν πειρωμένη,
Φοίβῳ τεκεῖν με φῄς, τεκοῦσ' οὐκ ἐκ θεοῦ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

μὰ τὴν παρασπίζουσαν ἅρμασίν ποτε
Νίκην Ἀθάναν Ζηνὶ γηγενεῖς ἔπι,
οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις σοι πατὴρ θνητῶν, τέκνον,
ἀλλ' ὅσπερ ἐξέθρεψε Λοξίας ἄναξ.

ΙΩΝ

πῶς οὖν τὸν αὑτοῦ παῖδ' ἔδωκ' ἄλλῳ πατρί,
Ξούθου τε φησὶ παῖδά μ' ἐκπεφυκέναι;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πεφυκέναι μὲν οὐχί, δωρεῖται δέ σε
αὑτοῦ γεγῶτα· καὶ γὰρ ἂν φίλος φίλῳ
δοίη τὸν αὑτοῦ παῖδα δεσπότην δόμων.

CHORUS

Let none e'er deem aught in the lot of man
Past hope, who marketh what to-day befalls.

ION

O Fortune, thou that shiftest countless mortals
Unto misfortune, and anon to weal,
How nearly to this pass we came, that I
Should slay my mother, should of her be slain!
Ah strange!
Yet—midst the bright embraces of the sun
Somewhere do such things day by day befall?
Sweet, mother, is my treasure-trove of thee;
And this my birth, I find no fault therein.

Yet somewhat would I say to thee apart.
Come hither: I would speak it in thine ear,
And fold about with darkness that thy past.
See to it, mother, lest thy steps have slipped,
As maids infatuate yield to love—to shame,
And upon Phoebus now thou chargest this,
And, striving to escape the shame of me,
Dost name the God my sire, who sire was none.

CREUSA

No!—by Athena, Lady of Victory, who
At Zeus' side chariot-borne with Giants fought,
No mortal man was sire to thee, my son,
But he which reared thee, Loxias the King.

ION

How gave he then his own son to another,
And named me Xuthus' true-begotten son?

CREUSA

Nay, not begotten; but his gift art thou,
Sprung from himself,—as friend to friend should give
His own son, that his house might have an heir.

ΙΩΝ

ὁ θεὸς ἀληθὴς, ἢ μάτην μαντεύεται,
ἐμοῦ ταράσσει, μῆτερ, εἰκότως φρένα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄκουε δή νυν ἅμ᾽ ἐσῆλθεν, ὦ τέκνον·
εὐεργετῶν σε Λοξίας ἐς εὐγενῆ
δόμον καθίζει· τοῦ θεοῦ δὲ λεγόμενος,
οὐκ ἔσχες ἄν ποτ᾽ οὔτε παγκλήρους δόμους
οὔτ᾽ ὄνομα πατρός. πῶς γάρ, οὗ γ᾽ ἐγὼ γάμους
ἔκρυπτον αὐτὴ καί σ᾽ ἀπέκτεινον λάθρα;
ὁ δ᾽ ὠφελῶν σε προστίθησ᾽ ἄλλῳ πατρί.

ΙΩΝ

οὐχ ὧδε φαύλως αὔτ᾽ ἐγὼ μετέρχομαι,
ἀλλ᾽ ἱστορήσω Φοῖβον εἰσελθὼν δόμους,
εἴτ᾽ εἰμὶ θνητοῦ πατρὸς εἴτε Λοξίου.
ἔα· τίς οἴκων θυοδόκων ὑπερτελὴς
ἀντήλιον πρόσωπον ἐκφαίνει θεῶν;
φεύγωμεν, ὦ τεκοῦσα, μὴ τὰ δαιμόνων
ὁρῶμεν, εἰ μὴ καιρός ἐσθ᾽ ἡμᾶς ὁρᾶν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

μὴ φεύγετ᾽· οὐ γὰρ πολεμίαν με φεύγετε,
ἀλλ᾽ ἔν τ᾽ Ἀθήναις κἀνθάδ᾽ οὖσαν εὐμενῆ.
ἐπώνυμος δὲ σῆς ἀφικόμην χθονός,
Παλλάς, δρόμῳ σπεύσασ᾽ Ἀπόλλωνος πάρα,
ὃς εἰς μὲν ὄψιν σφῷν μολεῖν οὐκ ἠξίου,
μὴ τῶν πάροιθε μέμψις εἰς μέσον μόλῃ,
ἡμᾶς δὲ πέμπει τοὺς λόγους ὑμῖν φράσαι,
ὡς ἥδε τίκτει σ᾽ ἐξ Ἀπόλλωνος πατρός,
δίδωσι δ᾽ οἷς ἔδωκεν, οὐ φύσασί σε,
ἀλλ᾽ ὡς κομίζῃ σ᾽ οἶκον εὐγενέστατον.
ἐπεὶ δ᾽ ἀνεῴχθη πρᾶγμα μηνυθὲν τόδε,
θανεῖν σε δείσας μητρὸς ἐκ βουλευμάτων

ION

Is the God true?—or doth his oracle lie?
Mother, my soul it troubleth: well it may.

CREUSA

Hear now what cometh to my mind, my son;
Of kindness Loxias giveth thee a place
In a proud house: hadst thou been called his son,
Thou hadst had none inheritance thereof,
Nor a sire's name:—how couldst thou, when myself
Still hid his rape, yea, by thy secret death?
Thee for thy good to another sire he gives.

ION

Nay, not thus lightly on the quest I press.
I will ask Phoebus, entering his fane,
"Am I of Loxias, or a mortal sire?"

ATHENA *appears above the temple in her chariot.*

Ha! high above the incense-breathing house
What God reveals a face that fronts the Sun?
Let us flee, mother, lest we gaze on Gods,
Except in season meet for that great vision.

ATHENA

Fly not; no foe am I that ye should flee,
But, as in Athens, here am gracious-willed.
I come from thy land—land that bears my name:
I Pallas from Apollo speed in haste,
Who deigned not to reveal him to your sight,
Else must he chide you for things overpast,
But sendeth me to tell to you his words:—
Thee this queen bare, begotten of Apollo:
He gives to whom he gave, not that they gat thee,
But for thy bringing home to a princely house;
Then, when the matter was laid bare and told,
Fearing lest thou shouldst of her plot be slain,

καὶ τήνδε πρὸς σοῦ, μηχαναῖς ἐρρύσατο.
ἔμελλε δ' αὐτὰ διασιωπήσας ἄναξ
ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις γνωριεῖν ταύτην τε σήν,
σέ θ' ὡς πέφυκας τῆσδε καὶ Φοίβου πατρός.
ἀλλ' ὡς περαίνω πρᾶγμα, καὶ χρησμοὺς θεοῦ,
ἐφ' οἷσιν ἔζευξ' ἅρματ', εἰσακούσατον.
λαβοῦσα τόνδε παῖδα Κεκροπίαν χθόνα
χώρει, Κρέουσα, κεἰς θρόνους τυραννικοὺς
ἵδρυσον· ἐκ γὰρ τῶν Ἐρεχθέως γεγὼς
δίκαιος ἄρχειν τῆς ἐμῆς ὅδε χθονός.
ἔσται δ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδ' εὐκλεής· οἱ τοῦδε γὰρ
παῖδες γενόμενοι τέσσαρες ῥίζης μιᾶς,
ἐπώνυμοι γῆς κἀπιφυλίου χθονὸς
λαῶν ἔσονται, σκόπελον οἳ ναίουσ' ἐμόν.
Γελέων μὲν ἔσται πρῶτος· εἶτα δεύτερος

. . . .

Ὅπλητες Ἀργαδῆς τ', ἐμῆς τ' ἀπ' αἰγίδος
ἓν φῦλον ἕξουσ' Αἰγικορῆς. οἱ τῶνδε δ' αὖ
παῖδες γενόμενοι σὺν χρόνῳ πεπρωμένῳ
Κυκλάδας ἐποικήσουσι νησαίας πόλεις
χέρσους τε παράλους, ὃ σθένος τἠμῇ χθονὶ
δίδωσιν· ἀντίπορθμα δ' ἠπείροιν δυοῖν
πεδία κατοικήσουσιν, Ἀσιάδος τε γῆς
Εὐρωπίας τε· τοῦδε δ' ὀνόματος χάριν
Ἴωνες ὀνομασθέντες ἕξουσιν κλέος.
Ξούθῳ δὲ καὶ σοὶ γίγνεται κοινὸν γένος,
Δῶρος μέν, ἔνθεν Δωρὶς ὑμνηθήσεται
πόλις· κατ' αἶαν Πελοπίαν δ' ὁ δεύτερος
Ἀχαιός, ὃς γῆς παραλίας Ῥίου πέλας
τύραννος ἔσται, κἀπισημανθήσεται
κείνου κεκλῆσθαι λαὸς ὄνομ' ἐπώνυμος.
καλῶς δ' Ἀπόλλων πάντ' ἔπραξε· πρῶτα μὲν

And she of thee, saved thee by that device.
Now the God would have kept the secret hid
Until in Athens he revealed her thine,
And thee the son of her and Phoebus born.

But—to make end and tell his oracles,
For which I yoked my chariot, hearken ye.
Take this thy son and go to Cecrops' land,
Creusa, and on thrones of sovereignty
Seat him; for, of Erechtheus' lineage sprung,
Worthy he is to rule o'er mine own land.
Famed shall he be through Hellas; for the sons
Born to him, even four from this one root,
Shall give their names unto the several tribes
Of the land's folk which dwell upon mine hill.

Geleon the first shall be; the second tribe
Hopletes; Argades the third: the fourth,
One tribe, of my shield named Aegicores.
And their sons in the fulness of the time
Shall found them cities in the Cyclad Isles,
And seaboard realms, for strength unto my land.
Yea, they shall people either mainland's plains
On either side the strait, of Asia-land
And Europe: and because of thy son's name
Ionians shall be named, and win renown.

From Xuthus too and thee a seed shall spring,
Dorus, of whom shall Doris song-renowned
Arise: the second goeth to Pelops' land,
Achaeus; o'er the seaboard shall he reign
Nigh Rhion, and the people of his name
Among the nations shall be sealed therewith.
Well hath Apollo all things done: for, first,

ἄνοσον λοχεύει σ', ὥστε μὴ γνῶναι φίλους·
ἐπεὶ δ' ἔτικτες τόνδε παῖδα κἀπέθου
ἐν σπαργάνοισιν, ἁρπάσαντ' ἐς ἀγκάλας
Ἑρμῆν κελεύει δεῦρο πορθμεῦσαι βρέφος,
ἔθρεψέ τ' οὐδ' εἴασεν ἐκπνεῦσαι βίον.
νῦν οὖν σιώπα, παῖς ὅδ' ὡς πέφυκε σός,
ἵν' ἡ δόκησις Ξοῦθον ἡδέως ἔχῃ,
σύ τ' αὖ τὰ σαυτῆς ἀγάθ' ἔχουσ' ἴῃς, γύναι.
καὶ χαίρετ'· ἐκ γὰρ τῆσδ' ἀναψυχῆς πόνων
εὐδαίμον' ὑμῖν πότμον ἐξαγγέλλομαι.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ Διὸς Παλλὰς μεγίστου θύγατερ, οὐκ ἀπιστίᾳ
σοὺς λόγους ἐνδεξόμεσθα· πείθομαι δ' εἶναι πατρὸς
Λοξίου καὶ τῆσδε· καὶ πρὶν τοῦτο δ' οὐκ ἄπιστον ἦν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τἀμὰ νῦν ἄκουσον· αἰνῶ Φοῖβον οὐκ αἰνοῦσα πρίν,
οὕνεχ' οὗ ποτ' ἠμέλησε παιδὸς ἀποδίδωσί μοι.
αἵδε δ' εὐωποὶ πύλαι μοι καὶ θεοῦ χρηστήρια,
δυσμενῆ πάροιθεν ὄντα. νῦν δὲ καὶ ῥόπτρων χέρας
ἡδέως ἐκκρημνάμεσθα καὶ προσεννέπω πύλας.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ᾔνεσ' οὕνεκ' εὐλογεῖς θεὸν μεταβαλοῦσ'· ἀεὶ γὰρ οὖν
χρόνια μὲν τὰ τῶν θεῶν πως, εἰς τέλος δ' οὐκ ἀσθενῆ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ τέκνον, στείχωμεν οἴκους.

He gave thee health in travail; so none knew:
And, when thou hadst borne this child, and cast
him out
In swaddling-bands, bade Hermes in his arms
Snatch him away, and hither waft thy babe;
And nurtured him, nor suffered him to die.
Now therefore say not that this lad is thine,
That Xuthus in his phantasy may joy,
And thine the substance, lady, be of bliss.
Farewell ye: after this relief from woes
I bring you tidings of a happy lot.

ION

Pallas, Daughter of the Highest, child of Zeus, we
will receive [believe
These thy words with no unfaith, but Loxias do I
Sire to me, and her my mother:—never was this
past belief.

CREUSA

Hear me: Phoebus praise I, whom I praised not in
mine hour of grief, [now restores.
For that whom he set at naught, his child, to me he
Lovely is his oracle, and fair to me these temple-
doors, [portal-ring,
Hateful though they were aforetime. Now unto the
As I bid his gates my blithe farewell, with loving
hands I cling.

ATHENA

Well dost thou to turn to praises of the God: so is it
still—
Slow the Gods' hands haply are, but mightily at last
fulfil.

CREUSA

Homeward let us pass, my son.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

στείχεθ', ἕψομαι δ' ἐγώ.

ΙΩΝ

ἀξία γ' ἡμῶν ὁδουρός.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ φιλοῦσά γε πτόλιν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

εἰς θρόνους δ' ἵζου παλαιούς.

ΙΩΝ

ἄξιον τὸ κτῆμά μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Διὸς Λητοῦς τ' Ἄπολλον, χαῖρ'· ὅτῳ δ' ἐλαύνεται
συμφοραῖς οἶκος, σέβοντα δαίμονας θαρσεῖν χρεών·
εἰς τέλος γὰρ οἱ μὲν ἐσθλοὶ τυγχάνουσιν ἀξίων,
οἱ κακοὶ δ', ὥσπερ πεφύκασ', οὔποτ' εὖ πράξειαν ἄν.

ATHENA

Pass on: myself shall following come.

ION

Best way-warden art thou!

CREUSA

Thou who holdest dear our city-home

ATHENE

Seat thee on the ancient throne.

ION

A goodly heritage is mine.

CHORUS

Zeus' and Leto's Son Apollo, hail! Let him to powers divine
Render homage undismayed, whose house affliction's buffets smite:
For the good at last shall overcome, at last attain their right;
But the evil, by their nature's law, on good shall never light.

[*Exeunt in procession to marching music.*

HIPPOLYTUS

ARGUMENT

HIPPOLYTA, *Queen of the Amazons, bore to Theseus, king of Athens and Troezen, a son whom he named from her, Hippolytus. Now this youth grew up of all men most pure in heart, reverencing chiefly Artemis the Maiden, Goddess of the Chase, and utterly contemning the worship of Aphrodite. Wherefore the wrath of the Queen of Love was kindled against him, and she made Phaedra, his father's young wife, mad with love for him; and although she wrestled with her malady, and strove to hide it in her heart, till by the fever of it she was brought nigh to death's door, yet in the end it was revealed, and was made destruction to her and to Hippolytus also.*

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ
ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΚΥΝΗΓΩΝ
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΤΡΟΙΖΗΝΙΩΝ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ
ΤΡΟΦΟΣ
ΦΑΙΔΡΑ
ΘΗΣΕΥΣ
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

APHRODITE (or CYPRIS), *the Queen of Love.*

HIPPOLYTUS, *son of Theseus and Hippolyta Queen of the Amazons.*

PHAEDRA, *daughter of Minos king of Crete, and wife of Theseus.*

NURSE OF PHAEDRA.

THESEUS, *king of Athens and Troezen.*

ARTEMIS, *Goddess of Hunting.*

SERVANT OF HIPPOLYTUS.

MESSENGER, *henchman of Hippolytus.*

CHORUS, *composed of women of Troezen.*

CHORUS *of huntsmen.*

Attendants and handmaids.

SCENE: Before the palace of Theseus at Troezen, where Theseus dwelt, being self-exiled for a year from Athens, to expiate the shedding of the blood of kinsmen who had sought to dethrone him.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ

Πολλὴ μὲν ἐν βροτοῖσι κοὐκ ἀνώνυμος
θεὰ κέκλημαι Κύπρις, οὐρανοῦ τ' ἔσω·
ὅσοι τε πόντου τερμόνων τ' Ἀτλαντικῶν
ναίουσιν εἴσω φῶς ὁρῶντες ἡλίου,
τοὺς μὲν σέβοντας τἀμὰ πρεσβεύω κράτη,
σφάλλω δ' ὅσοι φρονοῦσιν εἰς ἡμᾶς μέγα.
ἔνεστι γὰρ δὴ κἀν θεῶν γένει τόδε,
τιμώμενοι χαίρουσιν ἀνθρώπων ὕπο.
δείξω δὲ μύθων τῶνδ' ἀλήθειαν τάχα·
ὁ γάρ με Θησέως παῖς, Ἀμαζόνος τόκος
Ἱππόλυτος, ἁγνοῦ Πιτθέως παιδεύματα,
μόνος πολιτῶν τῆσδε γῆς Τροιζηνίας
λέγει κακίστην δαιμόνων πεφυκέναι,
ἀναίνεται δὲ λέκτρα κοὐ ψαύει γάμων·
Φοίβου δ' ἀδελφὴν Ἄρτεμιν Διὸς κόρην
τιμᾷ, μεγίστην δαιμόνων ἡγούμενος·
χλωρὰν δ' ἀν' ὕλην παρθένῳ ξυνὼν ἀεὶ
κυσὶν ταχείαις θῆρας ἐξαιρεῖ χθονός,
μείζω βροτείας προσπεσὼν ὁμιλίας.
τούτοισι μέν νυν οὐ φθονῶ· τί γάρ με δεῖ;
ἃ δ' εἰς ἔμ' ἡμάρτηκε, τιμωρήσομαι
Ἱππόλυτον ἐν τῇδ' ἡμέρᾳ· τὰ πολλὰ δὲ
πάλαι προκόψασ', οὐ πόνου πολλοῦ με δεῖ.

HIPPOLYTUS

Enter APHRODITE

APHRODITE

Mighty on earth, mighty in heaven, am I
Cypris the Goddess named, a glorious name.
And of all dwellers 'twixt the Pontic Sea
And Atlas' bourn, which look on the sun's light,
I honour them which reverence my power,
But bring the proud hearts that defy me low.
For even to the Gods this appertains,
That in the homage of mankind they joy.
And I will give swift proof of these my words:
For Theseus' son, born of the Amazon,
Hippolytus, pure-hearted Pittheus' ward,
Sole mid the folk of this Troezenian land
Sayeth that vilest of the Gods am I;
Rejects the couch; of marriage will he none,
But honours Phoebus' sister Artemis,
Zeus' child, and counts her greatest of the Gods;
And through the greenwood in the Maid's train still
With swift hounds sweeps the wild beasts from the earth,
Linked with companionship too high for man.
Yet this I grudge not: what is this to me?
But his defiance of me will I avenge
Upon Hippolytus this day: the path
Well-nigh is cleared; scant pains it needeth yet.

ἐλθόντα γάρ νιν Πιτθέως ποτ' ἐκ δόμων
σεμνῶν ἐς ὄψιν καὶ τέλη μυστηρίων
Πανδίονος γῆν, πατρὸς εὐγενὴς δάμαρ
ἰδοῦσα Φαίδρα καρδίαν κατείχετο
ἔρωτι δεινῷ τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλεύμασι.
καὶ πρὶν μὲν ἐλθεῖν τήνδε γῆν Τροιζηνίαν,
πέτραν παρ' αὐτὴν Παλλάδος κατόψιον
γῆς τῆσδε ναὸν Κύπριδος ἐγκαθίσατο,
ἐρῶσ' ἔρωτ' ἔκδημον· Ἱππολύτῳ δ' ἔπι
τὸ λοιπὸν ὠνόμαζεν ἱδρῦσθαι θεάν.
ἐπεὶ δὲ Θησεὺς Κεκροπίαν λείπει χθόνα,
μίασμα φεύγων αἵματος Παλλαντιδῶν,
καὶ τήνδε σὺν δάμαρτι ναυστολεῖ χθόνα,
ἐνιαυσίαν ἔκδημον αἰνέσας φυγήν,
ἐνταῦθα δὴ στένουσα κἀκπεπληγμένη
κέντροις ἔρωτος ἡ τάλαιν' ἀπόλλυται
σιγῇ· σύνοιδε δ' οὔτις οἰκετῶν νόσον.
ἀλλ' οὔτι ταύτῃ τόνδ' ἔρωτα χρὴ πεσεῖν·
δείξω δὲ Θησεῖ πρᾶγμα, κἀκφανήσεται.
καὶ τὸν μὲν ἡμῖν πολέμιον νεανίαν
κτενεῖ πατὴρ ἀραῖσιν, ἃς ὁ πόντιος
ἄναξ Ποσειδῶν ὤπασεν Θησεῖ γέρας,
μηδὲν μάταιον εἰς τρὶς εὔξασθαι θεῷ.
ἡ δ' εὐκλεὴς μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀπόλλυται,
Φαίδρα· τὸ γὰρ τῆσδ' οὐ προτιμήσω κακὸν
τὸ μὴ οὐ παρασχεῖν τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐχθροὺς ἐμοὶ
δίκην τοσαύτην ὥστ' ἐμοὶ καλῶς ἔχειν.
ἀλλ', εἰσορῶ γὰρ τόνδε παῖδα Θησέως
στείχοντα θήρας μόχθον ἐκλελοιπότα,
Ἱππόλυτον, ἔξω τῶνδε βήσομαι τόπων.
πολὺς δ' ἅμ' αὐτῷ προσπόλων ὀπισθόπους
κῶμος λέλακεν Ἄρτεμιν τιμῶν θεάν

For, as from halls of Pittheus once he sought
Pandion's land, to see and to be sealed
In the Great Mysteries, Phaedra, high-born wife
Of his own father, saw him; and her heart
In fierce love was enthralled by my device.

She, ere she came to this Troezenian land,
Hard by the Rock of Pallas, which looks down
On this land, built to me a shrine, for love
Of one afar; and for Hippolytus' sake
She named it "Love Fast-anchored," for all time.
But since from Cecrops' land forth Theseus passed,
Fleeing the blood-guilt of the sons of Pallas,
And unto this shore with his wife hath sailed,
Submitting unto exile for one year,
Thenceforward, sighing and by stings of love
Distraught, the hapless one wastes down to death
Silent: her malady no handmaid knows.
Ah, but not so shall this love's issue fall.
Theseus shall know this thing; all bared shall be:
And him that is my foe his sire shall slay
By curses, whose fulfilment the Sea-king
Poseidon gave to Theseus in this boon—
To ask three things of him, nor pray in vain.
And she shall die—O yea, her name unstained,
Yet Phaedra dies: I will not so regard
Her pain, as not to visit on my foes
Such penalty as is mine honour's due.

But,—forasmuch as Theseus' son I see
Yonder draw near, forsaking hunting's toil,
Hippolytus,—forth will I from this place.
Ha, a great press of henchmen following shout,
Honouring with songs the Goddess Artemis!

ὕμνοισιν· οὐ γὰρ οἶδ᾽ ἀνεῳγμένας πύλας
Ἅιδου φάος τε λοίσθιον βλέπων τόδε.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἕπεσθ᾽ ᾄδοντες ἕπεσθε
τὰν Διὸς οὐρανίαν
Ἄρτεμιν, ᾇ μελόμεσθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΚΥΝΗΓΩΝ

πότνια πότνια σεμνοτάτα,
Ζανὸς γένεθλον,
χαῖρε χαῖρέ μοι, ὦ κόρα
Λατοῦς Ἄρτεμι καὶ Διός,
καλλίστα πολὺ παρθένων,
ἃ μέγαν κατ᾽ οὐρανὸν
ναίεις εὐπατέρειαν αὐλάν,
Ζανὸς πολύχρυσον οἶκον.
χαῖρέ μοι, ὦ καλλίστα
καλλίστα τῶν κατ᾽ Ὄλυμπον
παρθένων, Ἄρτεμι.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

σοὶ τόνδε πλεκτὸν στέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτου
λειμῶνος, ὦ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω,
ἔνθ᾽ οὔτε ποιμὴν ἀξιοῖ φέρβειν βοτὰ
οὔτ᾽ ἦλθέ πω σίδηρος, ἀλλ᾽ ἀκήρατον
μέλισσα λειμῶν᾽ ἠρινὸν διέρχεται·
Αἰδὼς δὲ ποταμίαισι κηπεύει δρόσοις.
ὅσοις διδακτὸν μηδέν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐν τῇ φύσει
τὸ σωφρονεῖν εἴληχεν εἰς τὰ πάνθ᾽ ὁμῶς,
τούτοις δρέπεσθαι, τοῖς κακοῖσι δ᾽ οὐ θέμις.
ἀλλ᾽ ὦ φίλη δέσποινα, χρυσέας κόμης
ἀνάδημα δέξαι χειρὸς εὐσεβοῦς ἄπο.
μόνῳ γάρ ἐστι τοῦτ᾽ ἐμοὶ γέρας βροτῶν·
σοὶ καὶ ξύνειμι καὶ λόγοις σ᾽ ἀμείβομαι,

He knows not Hades' gates wide flung for him,
And this day's light the last his eyes shall see.
[*Exit.*

Enter HIPPOLYTUS *and* ATTENDANT HUNTSMEN.

HIPPOLYTUS

Follow on, follow on, ring out the lay
Unto Artemis high enthroned in the sky,
Zeus' child, in her keeping who hath us aye.

CHORUS OF HUNTSMEN

O Majesty, Daughter of Zeus, dread Queen,
I hail thee, Artemis, now,
O Leto's Daughter, O Zeus's child,
Loveliest far of the Undefiled!
In that great Home of the Mighty Father,
The palace of Zeus, mid the glory-sheen
Of gold—there dwellest thou.
O Fairest, to theeward in greeting I call,
Artemis, fairest of Maidens that gather
In Olympus' hall!

HIPPOLYTUS

For thee this woven garland from a mead
Unsullied have I twined, O Queen, and bring.
There never shepherd dares to feed his flock,
Nor steel of sickle came: only the bee
Roveth the springtide mead undesecrate:
And Reverence watereth it with river-dews.
They which have heritage of self-control
In all things, purity inborn, untaught,
These there may gather flowers, but none impure.
Now Queen, dear Queen, receive this anadem
From reverent hand to deck thy golden hair;
For to me sole of men this grace is given,
That I be with thee, converse hold with thee,

κλύων μὲν αὐδήν, ὄμμα δ' οὐχ ὁρῶν τὸ σόν.
τέλος δὲ κάμψαιμ' ὥσπερ ἠρξάμην βίου.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἄναξ, θεοὺς γὰρ δεσπότας καλεῖν χρεών,
ἆρ' ἄν τί μου δέξαιο βουλεύσαντος εὖ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

καὶ κάρτα γ'· ἦ γὰρ οὐ σοφοὶ φαινοίμεθ' ἄν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οἶσθ' οὖν βροτοῖσιν ὃς καθέστηκεν νόμος;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα· τοῦ δὲ καί μ' ἀνιστορεῖς πέρι;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μισεῖν τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ τὸ μὴ πᾶσιν φίλον;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὀρθῶς γε· τίς δ' οὐ σεμνὸς ἀχθεινὸς βροτῶν;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἐν δ' εὐπροσηγόροισιν ἔστι τις χάρις;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

πλείστη γε, καὶ κέρδος γε σὺν μόχθῳ βραχεῖ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἦ κἀν θεοῖσι ταὐτὸν ἐλπίζεις τόδε;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

εἴπερ γε θνητοὶ θεῶν νόμοισι χρώμεθα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πῶς οὖν σὺ σεμνὴν δαίμον' οὐ προσεννέπεις;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τίν'; εὐλαβοῦ δὲ μή τι σοῦ σφαλῇ στόμα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τήνδ' ἣ πύλαισι σαῖς ἐφέστηκεν Κύπρις.

Hearing thy voice, yet seeing not thy face.
And may I end life's race as I began.

SERVANT

Prince,—*Masters* may we call the Gods alone—
Wouldst thou receive of me good counselling?

HIPPOLYTUS

Yea surely: else were I fool manifest.

SERVANT

Knowest thou then the stablished wont of men?—

HIPPOLYTUS

Not I thy drift: whereof dost question me?

SERVANT

To hate the proud reserve that owns few friends.

HIPPOLYTUS

Rightly: what proud man is not odious?

SERVANT

And in the gracious is there naught of charm?

HIPPOLYTUS

Yea, much, and profit won with little pains.

SERVANT

And deem'st thou not this same may hold with Gods?

HIPPOLYTUS

Yea, if men live by laws derived from Gods.

SERVANT

Why not then greet a Goddess worshipful?

HIPPOLYTUS

Whom?—have a care thy lips in no wise err.[1]

SERVANT

Even Cypris, there above thy portal set.

[1] "The Worshipful Goddesses" was the peculiar title of the Eumenides, whom it was ill-omened to name.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

πρόσωθεν αὐτὴν ἁγνὸς ὢν ἀσπάζομαι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

σεμνή γε μέντοι κἀπίσημος ἐν βροτοῖς.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἄλλοισιν ἄλλος θεῶν τε κἀνθρώπων μέλει.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εὐδαιμονοίης νοῦν ἔχων ὅσον σε δεῖ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐδείς μ' ἀρέσκει νυκτὶ θαυμαστὸς θεῶν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τιμαῖσιν, ὦ παῖ, δαιμόνων χρῆσθαι χρεών.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

χωρεῖτ', ὀπαδοί, καὶ παρελθόντες δόμους
σίτων μέλεσθε· τερπνὸν ἐκ κυναγίας
τράπεζα πλήρης· καὶ καταψήχειν χρεὼν
ἵππους, ὅπως ἂν ἅρμασι ζεύξας ὕπο
βορᾶς κορεσθεὶς γυμνάσω τὰ πρόσφορα·
τὴν σὴν δὲ Κύπριν πόλλ' ἐγὼ χαίρειν λέγω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἡμεῖς δέ—τοὺς νέους γὰρ οὐ μιμητέον—
φρονοῦντες οὕτως ὡς πρέπει δούλοις λέγειν,
προσευξόμεσθα τοῖσι σοῖς ἀγάλμασι,
δέσποινα Κύπρι. χρὴ δὲ συγγνώμην ἔχειν,
εἴ τίς σ' ὑφ' ἥβης σπλάγχνον ἔντονον φέρων
μάταια βάζει· μὴ δόκει τούτου κλύειν·
σοφωτέρους γὰρ χρὴ βροτῶν εἶναι θεούς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὠκεανοῦ τις ὕδωρ στρ. α'
στάζουσα πέτρα λέγεται
βαπτὰν κάλπισι ῥυτὰν

HIPPOLYTUS

From far I greet her, who am undefiled.

SERVANT

Worshipful is she, glorious among men.

HIPPOLYTUS

Of Gods, of men, each maketh still his choice.

SERVANT

Now prosper thou ;—be needful wisdom thine!

HIPPOLYTUS

No God who hath night-homage pleaseth me.

SERVANT

Guerdons of Gods, my son, ought men to use.

HIPPOLYTUS

Depart, mine henchmen, enter ye the halls,
And set on bread. The full board welcome is
When hunting's done. And one must groom my steeds,
That I may yoke them to the chariot-pole,
Being full of meat, and breathe them in the race.
But to thy Cypris wave I long farewell. [*Exit.*

SERVANT

But we—who must not tread in steps of youth—
With whispered humbleness most meet for thralls
Make supplication to thine images,
Queen Cypris. It beseems thee to forgive,
If one that bears through youth a vehement heart
Speak folly. Be as though thou heardest not;
For wiser Gods should be than mortal men. [*Exit.*

Enter CHORUS *of Troezenian Ladies.*

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

A rock there is, wherefrom, as they tell, the springs
  of the heart of the Ocean well,
 Whence the rifts of the crags overbeetling send

παγὰν προϊεῖσα κρημνῶν,
ὅθι μοί τις ἦν φίλα,
πορφύρεα φάρεα
ποταμίᾳ δρόσῳ
τέγγουσα, θερμᾶς δ' ἐπὶ νῶτα πέτρας
εὐαλίου κατέβαλλ'· ὅθεν μοι
πρῶτα φάτις ἦλθε δέσποινας·

τειρομέναν νοσερᾷ — ἀντ. α'
κοίτᾳ δέμας ἐντὸς ἔχειν
οἴκων, λεπτὰ δὲ φάρη
ξανθὰν κεφαλὰν σκιάζειν.
τριτάταν δέ νιν κλύω
τάνδε κατ' ἀμβροσίου
στόματος ἁμέραν
Δάματρος ἀκτᾶς δέμας ἁγνὸν ἴσχειν,
κρυπτῷ πάθει θανάτου θέλουσαν
κέλσαι ποτὶ τέρμα δύστανον.

ἦ σύ γ'[1] ἔνθεος, ὦ κούρα, — στρ. β'
εἴτ' ἐκ Πανὸς εἴθ' Ἑκάτας
ἢ σεμνῶν Κορυβάντων
φοιτᾷς, ἢ ματρὸς ὀρείας;
σὺ δ' ἀμφὶ τὰν πολύθηρον
Δίκτυνναν ἀμπλακίαις
ἀνίερος ἀθύτων πελάνων τρύχει;
φοιτᾷ γὰρ καὶ διὰ λίμνας
χέρσον θ' ὑπὲρ πελάγους
δίναις ἐν νοτίαις ἅλμας.

ἢ πόσιν, τὸν Ἐρεχθειδᾶν — ἀντ. β'
ἀρχαγόν, τὸν εὐπατρίδαν,

[1] Metzger: for σὺ γὰρ of MSS.

For the plunging urns their founts outstreaming :
Even there did I light on a maiden, my friend,
As she drenched the mantles purple-gleaming
In the riverward-glittering spray,
And spread the dye of the Tyrian shell on the rocks where glowing the sunbeams fell.
Hers were the lips that I first heard say
How wasteth our lady away :

(*Ant.* 1)

For a tale they told of a fevered bed, of the feet that forth of her bower ne'er tread,
Of the dainty-woven veil that is cast
For a darkness over the tresses golden.
Yea, and by this hath the third day past [holden
That the queen from her fair young lips hath with-
The gift of the Lady of Corn,
Keeping her body thereof unfed, as though 'twere pollution to taste of bread,
With anguish unuttered longing forlorn
One haven to win—death's bourn.

O queen, what if this be possession (*Str.* 2)
Of Pan or of Hecate ?—
Of the Mother of Dindymus' Hill ?—
Or the awful Corybant thrill ?
Or hath Artemis found transgression
Of offerings unrendered in thee ? [here ?—
Hath the hand of the Huntress been
For she flasheth o'er mountain and mere,
And rideth her triumph-procession
Over surges and swirls of the sea.

Or thy princely lord, in whose leading (*Ant.* 2)
Be the hosts of Erechtheus' race,

ποιμαίνει τις ἐν οἴκοις
κρυπτὰ κοίτα λεχέων σῶν ;
ἢ ναυβάτας τις ἔπλευσεν
Κρήτας ἔξορμος ἀνὴρ
λιμένα τὸν εὐξεινότατον ναύταις,
φάμαν πέμπων βασιλείᾳ,
λύπᾳ δ' ὑπὲρ παθέων
εὐναίᾳ δέδεται ψυχά ;

φιλεῖ δὲ τᾷ δυστρόπῳ γυναικῶν ἐπῳδ.
ἁρμονίᾳ κακὰ δύστανος
ἀμηχανία συνοικεῖν
ὠδίνων τε καὶ ἀφροσύνας.
δι' ἐμᾶς ᾖξέν ποτε νηδύος ἅδ' αὔρα·
τὰν δ' εὔλοχον οὐρανίαν
τόξων μεδέουσαν ἀύτευν
Ἄρτεμιν, καί μοι πολυζήλωτος ἀεὶ
σὺν θεοῖσι φοιτᾷ.

ἀλλ' ἥδε τροφὸς γεραιὰ πρὸ θυρῶν
τήνδε κομίζουσ' ἔξω μελάθρων·
στυγνὸν δ' ὀφρύων νέφος αὐξάνεται.
τί ποτ' ἔστι μαθεῖν ἔραται ψυχή,
τί δεδήληται
δέμας ἀλλόχροον βασιλείας.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ κακὰ θνητῶν στυγεραί τε νόσοι.
τί σ' ἐγὼ δράσω ; τί δὲ μὴ δράσω ;
τόδε σοι φέγγος λαμπρόν, ὅδ' αἰθήρ·
ἔξω δὲ δόμων ἤδη νοσερᾶς
δέμνια κοίτης.

Hath one in his halls beguiled,
That thy couch is in secret defiled?
Or hath some sea-trafficker, speeding
From Crete over watery ways
To the haven where shipmen would be,
Brought dolorous tidings to thee
That hath bowed thee with anguish exceeding
On thy bed through thy soul's prison-days

(*Epode*)

Or shall this be the discord mournful, weirdly
haunting, [of woman's being?
That ofttimes jarreth and jangleth the strings
'Tis the shadow of travail-throes nigh, a delirium
spirit-daunting: [have felt it shiver:
Yea, I have known it, through mine own bosom
But I cried to the Queen of the Bow, to the Helper
in travail-throe for refuge fleeing;
And by grace of the Gods she hearkeneth ever
my fervent request, she is there to deliver.

But lo, through the doors where cometh the grey-
haired nurse
Leading the stricken one forth of her bowers:
On her brows aye darker the care-cloud lowers.
My spirit is yearning to know what is this strange
curse,
Wherefore the queen's cheek ever is paling,
And her strength is failing.

Enter PHAEDRA, NURSE, *and* HANDMAIDS.

NURSE

O afflictions of mortals, O bitter pain!
What shall I do unto thee, or refrain?
Lo here is the light of the sun, the sky:
Brought forth of the halls is thy bed; hereby
Thy cushions lie.

δεῦρο γὰρ ἐλθεῖν πᾶν ἔπος ἦν σοι·
τάχα δ' εἰς θαλάμους σπεύσεις το πάλιν.
ταχὺ γὰρ σφάλλει κοὐδενὶ χαίρεις,
οὐδέ σ' ἀρέσκει τὸ παρόν, τὸ δ' ἀπὸν
φίλτερον ἡγεῖ.

κρεῖσσον δὲ νοσεῖν ἢ θεραπεύειν·
τὸ μέν ἐστιν ἁπλοῦν, τῷ δὲ συνάπτει
λύπη τε φρενῶν χερσίν τε πόνος.
πᾶς δ' ὀδυνηρὸς βίος ἀνθρώπων,
κοὐκ ἔστι πόνων ἀνάπαυσις·
ἀλλ' ὅ τι τοῦ ζῆν φίλτερον ἄλλο
σκότος ἀμπίσχων κρύπτει νεφέλαις.
δυσέρωτες δὴ φαινόμεθ' ὄντες
τοῦδ', ὅ τι τοῦτο στίλβει κατὰ γῆν,
δι' ἀπειροσύνην ἄλλου βιότου
κοὐκ ἀπόδειξιν τῶν ὑπὸ γαίας·
μύθοις δ' ἄλλως φερόμεσθα.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

αἴρετέ μου δέμας, ὀρθοῦτε κάρα·
λέλυμαι μελέων σύνδεσμα, φίλαι.
λάβετ' εὐπήχεις χεῖρας, πρόπολοι.
βαρύ μοι κεφαλᾶς ἐπίκρανον ἔχειν·
ἄφελ', ἀμπέτασον βόστρυχον ὤμοις.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

θάρσει, τέκνον, καὶ μὴ χαλεπῶς
μετάβαλλε δέμας.
ῥᾷον δὲ νόσον μετά θ' ἡσυχίας
καὶ γενναίου λήματος οἴσεις·
μοχθεῖν δὲ βροτοῖσιν ἀνάγκη.

Hitherward wouldst thou come; it was all thy moan:
Yet aback to thy bowers wilt thou fret to be gone.
Thou art soon disappointed, thou joyest in naught,
What thou hast cannot please thee; a thing far-sought
Thy fancy hath caught.

Better be sick than tend the sick:
Here is but one pain; grief of mind
And toil of hands be there combined.
O'er all man's life woes gather thick;

Ne'er from its travail respite is.
If better life beyond be found,
The darkness veils, clouds wrap it round;
Therefore infatuate-fond to this

We cling—this earth's poor sunshine-gleam:
Naught know we of the life to come,
There speak no voices from the tomb:
We drift on fable's shadowy stream.

PHAEDRA

Uplift ye my body, mine head upraise.
Friends, faint be my limbs, and unknit be their bands.
Hold, maidens, my rounded arms and mine hands.
Ah, the coif on mine head all heavily weighs:
Take it thence till mine hair o'er my shoulders strays!

NURSE

Take heart, my child, nor in such wild wise
Toss thou thy body so feveredly.
Lighter to bear shall thy sickness be,
If thine high-born courage in calm strength rise:
For the doom of sorrow on all men lies.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

αἰαῖ.
πῶς ἂν δροσερᾶς ἀπὸ κρηνῖδος
καθαρῶν ὑδάτων πῶμ' ἀρυσαίμαν,
ὑπό τ' αἰγείροις ἔν τε κομήτῃ
λειμῶνι κλιθεῖσ' ἀναπαυσαίμαν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, τί θροεῖς ;
οὐ μὴ παρ' ὄχλῳ τάδε γηρύσει
μανίας ἔποχον ῥίπτουσα λόγον ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

πέμπετέ μ' εἰς ὄρος· εἶμι πρὸς ὕλαν
καὶ παρὰ πεύκας, ἵνα θηροφόνοι
στείβουσι κύνες
βαλιαῖς ἐλάφοις ἐγχριμπτόμεναι·
πρὸς θεῶν, ἔραμαι κυσὶ θωῦξαι
καὶ παρὰ χαίταν ξανθὰν ῥῖψαι
Θεσσαλὸν ὅρπακ', ἐπίλογχον ἔχουσ'
ἐν χειρὶ βέλος.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί πότ', ὦ τέκνον, τάδε κηραίνεις ;
τί κυνηγεσίων καὶ σοὶ μελέτη ;
τί δὲ κρηναίων νασμῶν ἔρασαι ;
πάρα γὰρ δροσερὰ πύργοις συνεχὴς
κλιτύς, ὅθεν σοι πῶμα γένοιτ' ἄν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

δέσποιν' ἁλίας Ἄρτεμι Λίμνας
καὶ γυμνασίων τῶν ἱπποκρότων,
εἴθε γενοίμαν ἐν σοῖς δαπέδοις,
πώλους Ἐνέτας δαμαλιζομένα.

PHAEDRA

Oh but to quaff, where the spray-veil drifteth
  O'er taintless fountains, the dear cool stream!
Oh to lie in the mead where the soft wind lifteth
  Its tresses—'neath poplars to lie and dream!

NURSE

My child, my child, what is this thou hast cried?
Ah, speak not thus, with a throng at thy side,
Wild words that on wings of madness ride!

PHAEDRA

Let me hence to the mountain afar—I will hie me
  To the forest, the pines where the stag-hounds follow
Hard after the fleet dappled hinds as they fly me!
  Oh, I long to cheer them with hunter's hollo,—
          Ah God, were I there!—
And to grasp the Thessalian shaft steel-gleaming,
And to swing it on high by my hair outstreaming—
          My golden hair!

NURSE

What wouldst thou, my darling, of suchlike things?
  Will naught save the hunt and the hounds content?
And why art thou yearning for fountain-springs?
  Lo, nigh to thy towers is a soft-sloped bent
  With streams for thy drinking dew-besprent.

PHAEDRA

Lady of Limne, the burg looking seaward,
  Of the thunder of hoofs on the wide race-courses,
Oh for the plains where the altars to theeward
  Flame, there to be curbing the Henetan horses!

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί τόδ' αὖ παράφρων ἔρριψας ἔπος;
νῦν δὴ μὲν ὄρος βᾶσ' ἐπὶ θήρας
πόθον ἐστέλλου, νῦν δ' αὖ ψαμάθοις
ἐπ' ἀκυμάντοις πώλων ἔρασαι.
τάδε μαντείας ἄξια πολλῆς,
ὅστις σε θεῶν ἀνασειράζει
καὶ παρακόπτει φρένας, ὦ παῖ.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

δύστανος ἐγώ, τί ποτ' εἰργασάμαν;
ποῖ παρεπλάγχθην γνώμας ἀγαθᾶς;
ἐμάνην, ἔπεσον δαίμονος ἄτᾳ.
φεῦ φεῦ, τλάμων.
μαῖα, πάλιν μου κρύψον κεφαλάν·
αἰδούμεθα γὰρ τὰ λελεγμένα μοι.
κρύπτε· κατ' ὄσσων δάκρυ μοι βαίνει,
καὶ ἐπ' αἰσχύναν ὄμμα τέτραπται.
τὸ γὰρ ὀρθοῦσθαι γνώμαν ὀδυνᾷ,
τὸ δὲ μαινόμενον κακόν· ἀλλὰ κρατεῖ
μὴ γιγνώσκοντ' ἀπολέσθαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

κρύπτω· τὸ δ' ἐμὸν πότε δὴ θάνατος
σῶμα καλύψει;
πολλὰ διδάσκει μ' ὁ πολὺς βίοτος·
χρῆν γὰρ μετρίας εἰς ἀλλήλους
φιλίας θνητοὺς ἀνακίρνασθαι,
καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἄκρον μυελὸν ψυχῆς,
εὔλυτα δ' εἶναι στέργηθρα φρενῶν
ἀπό τ' ὤσασθαι καὶ ξυντεῖναι.
τὸ δ' ὑπὲρ δισσῶν μίαν ὠδίνειν
ψυχὴν χαλεπὸν βάρος, ὡς κἀγὼ
τῆσδ' ὑπεραλγῶ.

NURSE

What speech in thy frenzy outflingest thou?
The mountain-ward path then fain hadst thou taken
On the track of the beasts: and thou yearnest now
For the steeds on the sea-sands wave-forsaken!
Of a surety the lore of a seer we lack
To tell what God, child, reineth thee back,
And scourgeth thy spirit from reason's track.

PHAEDRA

O hapless I—what is this I have done?
Whitherward have I wandered from wisdom's way?
I was mad, by a God's curse overthrown.
Oh ill-starred—well-a-day!
Dear Nurse, veil over mine head once more;
For I blush for the words from my lips that came.
Veil me: the tears from mine eyes down pour,
And mine eyelids sink for shame.
For anguish wakes when re-dawneth the mind:
Though a curse be madness, herein is it kind,
That the soul that it ruins it striketh blind.

NURSE

I veil thee:—ah that death would veil
Me too!—with many a lesson stern
The years have brought, this too I learn—
Be links of mortal friendship frail!

Let heart-strings ne'er together cling,
Nor be indissolubly twined
The chords of love, but lightly joined
For knitting close or severing.

Ah weary burden, where one soul
Travails for twain, as mine for thee!

βιότου δ' ἀτρεκεῖς ἐπιτηδεύσεις
φασὶ σφάλλειν πλέον ἢ τέρπειν,
τῇ θ' ὑγιείᾳ μᾶλλον πολεμεῖν.
οὕτω τὸ λίαν ἧσσον ἐπαινῶ
τοῦ μηδὲν ἄγαν·
καὶ ξυμφήσουσι σοφοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γύναι γεραιά, βασιλίδος πιστὴ τροφὲ
Φαίδρας, ὁρῶ μὲν τάσδε δυστήνους τύχας,
ἄσημα δ' ἡμῖν ἥτις ἐστὶν ἡ νόσος·
σοῦ δ' ἂν πυθέσθαι καὶ κλύειν βουλοίμεθ' ἄν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ' ἐλέγχουσ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐννέπειν θέλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδ' ἥτις ἀρχὴ τῶνδε πημάτων ἔφυ ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

εἰς ταὐτὸν ἥκεις· πάντα γὰρ σιγᾷ τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὡς ἀσθενεῖ τε καὶ κατέξανται δέμας.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

πῶς δ' οὔ, τριταίαν οὖσ' ἄσιτος ἡμέραν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πότερον ὑπ' ἄτης ἢ θανεῖν πειρωμένη ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

θανεῖν· ἀσιτεῖ δ' εἰς ἀπόστασιν βίου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θαυμαστὸν εἶπας, εἰ τάδ' ἐξαρκεῖ πόσει.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

κρύπτει γὰρ ἥδε πῆμα κοὔ φησιν νοσεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ δ' εἰς πρόσωπον οὐ τεκμαίρεται βλέπων ;

Ruin, not bliss, say they, shall be
Care's life-absorbing heart-control.

Yea, that way sickness, madness, lies.
Therefore "the overmuch" shall be
Less than "the naught-too-much" for me:
So say I: so shall say the wise.

CHORUS

Thou grey-haired dame, queen Phaedra's loyal nurse,
In sooth I mark her lamentable plight,
Yet what her malady, to us is dark.
Fain would we question thee and hear thereof.

NURSE

I know not, though I ask: she will not tell.

CHORUS

Nor what was the beginning of these woes?

NURSE

The same thy goal: naught sayeth she of all.

CHORUS

How strengthless and how wasted is her frame!

NURSE

No marvel, being three days foodless now.

CHORUS

Madness is this, or set resolve to die?

NURSE

To die: she fasteth to make end of life.

CHORUS

Strange is thy tale, if this content her lord.

NURSE

Nay, but she hides her pain, nor owns she ails.

CHORUS

Should he not guess?—one glance upon her face?

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἔκδημος ὢν γὰρ τῆσδε τυγχάνει χθονός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνάγκην προσφέρεις, πειρωμένη
νόσον πυθέσθαι τῆσδε καὶ πλάνον φρενῶν ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

εἰς πᾶν ἀφῖγμαι κοὐδὲν εἴργασμαι πλέον·
οὐ μὴν ἀνήσω γ' οὐδὲ νῦν προθυμίας,
ὡς ἂν παροῦσα καὶ σύ μοι ξυμμαρτυρῇς
οἵα πέφυκα δυστυχοῦσι δεσπόταις.
ἄγ', ὦ φίλη παῖ, τῶν πάροιθε μὲν λόγων
λαθώμεθ' ἄμφω, καὶ σύ θ' ἡδίων γενοῦ
στυγνὴν ὀφρὺν λύσασα καὶ γνώμης ὁδόν,
ἐγώ θ' ὅπῃ σοι μὴ καλῶς τόθ' εἱπόμην
μεθεῖσ' ἐπ' ἄλλον εἶμι βελτίω λόγον.
κεἰ μὲν νοσεῖς τι τῶν ἀπορρήτων κακῶν,
γυναῖκες αἵδε συγκαθιστάναι νόσον·
εἰ δ' ἔκφορός σοι συμφορὰ πρὸς ἄρσενας,
λέγ', ὡς ἰατροῖς πρᾶγμα μηνυθῇ τόδε.
εἶεν· τί σιγᾷς ; οὐκ ἐχρῆν σιγᾶν, τέκνον,
ἀλλ' ἤ μ' ἐλέγχειν, εἴ τι μὴ καλῶς λέγω,
ἢ τοῖσιν εὖ λεχθεῖσι συγχωρεῖν λόγοις.
φθέγξαι τι, δεῦρ' ἄθρησον· ὢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.
γυναῖκες, ἄλλως τούσδε μοχθοῦμεν πόνους,
ἴσον δ' ἄπεσμεν τῷ πρίν· οὔτε γὰρ τότε
λόγοις ἐτέγγεθ' ἥδε νῦν τ' οὐ πείθεται.
ἀλλ' ἴσθι μέντοι—πρὸς τάδ' αὐθαδεστέρα
γίγνου θαλάσσης—εἰ θανεῖ, προδοῦσα σοὺς
παῖδας πατρῴων μὴ μεθέξοντας δόμων,
μὰ τὴν ἄνασσαν ἱππίαν Ἀμαζόνα,
ἣ σοῖς τέκνοισι δεσπότην ἐγείνατο
νόθον φρονοῦντα γνήσι', οἶσθά νιν καλῶς,
Ἱππόλυτον,—

NURSE

Nay, absent is he from this land of late.

CHORUS

But thou—dost not constrain her, strive to learn
Her malady and wandering of her wit?

NURSE

All have I tried, and naught the more availed.
Yet will I not even now abate my zeal:
So stand thou by and witness unto me
How true am I to mine afflicted lords.

Come, darling child, the words said heretofore
Forget we both; more gracious-souled be thou:
Thy lowering brow, thy wayward mood, put by;
And I, wherein I erred in following thee,
Refrain, and unto wiser counsels seek.
If thy disease be that thou mayst not name,
Lo women here to allay thy malady.
But if to men thy trouble may be told,
Speak, that to leeches this may be declared.
Ha, silent?—silence, child, beseems thee not.
Or thou shouldst chide me if I speak not well,
Or unto pleadings wisely uttered yield.
One word!—look hitherward! . . . . ah, woe is me!
Women, we toil and spend our strength for naught,
And still are far as ever: of my words
Unmelted was she then, nor hearkeneth now.

Howbeit know thou—then be waywarder
Than is the sea,—thy death shall but betray
Thy sons, who shall not share their father's halls—
No, by that chariot-queen, the Amazon,
Who bare to thy sons a bastard over-lord,—
Not bastard-thoughted,—well thou knowest him,
Hippolytus—

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

οἴμοι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

θιγγάνει σέθεν τόδε;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἀπώλεσάς με, μαῖα, καί σε πρὸς θεῶν
τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς αὖθις λίσσομαι σιγᾶν πέρι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὁρᾷς; φρονεῖς μὲν εὖ, φρονοῦσα δ' οὐ θέλεις
παῖδάς τ' ὀνῆσαι καὶ σὸν ἐκσῶσαι βίον.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

φιλῶ τέκν'· ἄλλῃ δ' ἐν τύχῃ χειμάζομαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἁγνὰς μέν, ὦ παῖ, χεῖρας αἵματος φορεῖς;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

χεῖρες μὲν ἁγναί, φρὴν δ' ἔχει μίασμά τι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

μῶν ἐξ ἐπακτοῦ πημονῆς ἐχθρῶν τινός;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

φίλος μ' ἀπόλλυσ' οὐχ ἑκοῦσαν οὐχ ἑκών.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

Θησεύς τιν' ἡμάρτηκεν εἰς σ' ἁμαρτίαν;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

μὴ δρῶσ' ἔγωγ' ἐκεῖνον ὀφθείην κακῶς.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί γὰρ τὸ δεινὸν τοῦθ' ὅ σ' ἐξαίρει θανεῖν;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἔα μ' ἁμαρτεῖν· οὐ γὰρ εἰς σ' ἁμαρτάνω.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐ δῆθ' ἑκοῦσά γ', ἐν δὲ σοὶ λελείψομαι.

PHAEDRA

Woe's me!

NURSE

It stings thee, this?

PHAEDRA

Thou hast undone me, nurse: by heaven, I pray,
Speak thou the name of this man nevermore.

NURSE

Lo there!—thy wit is sound: yet of thy wit
Thou wilt not help thy sons nor save thy life!

PHAEDRA

I love them: other storms of fate toss me.

NURSE

Sure, thine are hands, my child, unstained with blood?

PHAEDRA

Pure be mine hands: the stain is on my soul.

NURSE

Not, not of sorcery-spells by some foe cast?

PHAEDRA

A friend's blow this, unsought of him or me.

NURSE

Hath Theseus wrought against thee any sin?

PHAEDRA

May I be found as clear of wrong to him!

NURSE

What then is this strange thing that deathward drives thee?

PHAEDRA

Let be my sin! Not against thee I sin.

NURSE

Of my will, never! On thine head my failure!

[*Clings to* PHAEDRA's *hands.*

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

τί δρᾷς ; βιάζει χειρὸς ἐξαρτωμένη ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

καὶ σῶν γε γονάτων, κοὐ μεθήσομαί ποτε.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

κάκ', ὦ τάλαινα, σοὶ τάδ', εἰ πεύσει, κακά.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

μεῖζον γὰρ ἢ σοῦ μὴ τυχεῖν τί μοι κακόν ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὀλεῖ· τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἐμοὶ τιμὴν φέρει.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

κἄπειτα κρύπτεις χρήσθ' ἱκνουμένης ἐμοῦ ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἐκ τῶν γὰρ αἰσχρῶν ἐσθλὰ μηχανώμεθα.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὔκουν λέγουσα τιμιωτέρα φανεῖ ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἄπελθε πρὸς θεῶν δεξιᾶς τ' ἐμῆς μέθες.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεί μοι δῶρον οὐ δίδως ὃ χρῆν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

δώσω· σέβας γὰρ χειρὸς αἰδοῦμαι τὸ σόν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

σιγῷμ' ἂν ἤδη· σὸς γὰρ οὑντεῦθεν λόγος.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὦ τλῆμον, οἷον, μῆτερ, ἠράσθης ἔρον,

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὃν ἔσχε ταύρου, τέκνον, ἢ τί φῂς τόδε ;

PHAEDRA

Violence to me!—to mine hand clingest thou?

NURSE

Yea, and thy knees—nor ever will let go!

PHAEDRA

Thy doom, unhappy, shouldst thou hear in mine.

NURSE

What darker doom for me than losing thee?

PHAEDRA

Death! Ah, but mine own death shall be mine honour!

NURSE

Still dost thou hide it, when I pray thy good?

PHAEDRA

Yea, for I fashion out of evil good.

NURSE

If then thou tell me, more shall be thine honour.

PHAEDRA

For God's sake hence away: let go mine hand.

NURSE

No!—while thou grantest not the boon my due.

PHAEDRA

I will, in reverence of thy suppliant hand.

NURSE

I am dumb: henceforth thy part it is to speak.

PHAEDRA

O hapless mother[1]!—what strange love was thine!

NURSE

Love for the bull, my child?—or what wouldst name?

[1] Pasiphaë, of whose unnatural passion the Minotaur was born.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

σύ τ', ὦ τάλαιν' ὅμαιμε, Διονύσου δάμαρ,

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τέκνον, τί πάσχεις; συγγόνους κακορροθεῖς;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

τρίτη τ' ἐγὼ δύστηνος ὡς ἀπόλλυμαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἔκ τοι πέπληγμαι· ποῖ προβήσεται λόγος;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἐκεῖθεν ἡμεῖς οὐ νεωστὶ δυστυχεῖς.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐδέν τι μᾶλλον οἶδ' ἃ βούλομαι κλύειν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

φεῦ·
πῶς ἂν σύ μοι λέξειας ἁμὲ χρὴ λέγειν;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐ μάντις εἰμὶ τἀφανῆ γνῶναι σαφῶς.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

τί τοῦθ', ὃ δὴ λέγουσιν ἀνθρώπους, ἐρᾶν;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἥδιστον, ὦ παῖ, ταὐτὸν ἀλγεινόν θ' ἅμα.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἡμεῖς ἄρ' ἦμεν θατέρῳ κεχρημένοι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί φής; ἐρᾷς, ὦ τέκνον, ἀνθρώπων τίνος;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὅστις πόθ' οὗτός ἐσθ', ὁ τῆς Ἀμαζόνος.—

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

Ἱππόλυτον αὐδᾷς;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

σοῦ τάδ', οὐκ ἐμοῦ κλύεις.

PHAEDRA

And thou, sad sister, Dionysus' bride[1]!

NURSE

What ails thee, child?—dost thou revile thy kin?

PHAEDRA

And I the third—how am I misery-wrecked!

NURSE

I am 'wildered all—whereunto tend thy words?

PHAEDRA

To the rock that wrecks us all, yea, from of old.

NURSE

None the more know I that I fain would know.

PHAEDRA

Ah, couldst thou say for me what I must say!

NURSE

No seer am I to interpret hidden things.

PHAEDRA

What mean they when they speak of this—to love?

NURSE

The sweetest thing, my child—the bitterest too.

PHAEDRA

For me, the second only have I proved.

NURSE

What say'st thou?—child, thou lovest—oh, what man?

PHAEDRA

Whate'er his name—'tis he—the Amazon's—

NURSE

Hippolytus!

PHAEDRA

Thou sayest it, not I.

[1] Ariadne, who, for Theseus' sake, was traitress to her father.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οἴμοι, τί λέξεις, τέκνον; ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας.
γυναῖκες, οὐκ ἀνασχέτ', οὐκ ἀνέξομαι
ζῶσ'· ἐχθρὸν ἦμαρ, ἐχθρὸν εἰσορῶ φάος.
ῥίψω, μεθήσω σῶμ', ἀπαλλαχθήσομαι
βίου θανοῦσα· χαίρετ'· οὐκέτ' εἴμ' ἐγώ.
οἱ σώφρονες γὰρ οὐχ ἑκόντες, ἀλλ' ὅμως
κακῶν ἐρῶσι. Κύπρις οὐκ ἄρ' ἦν θεός,
ἀλλ' εἴ τι μεῖζον ἄλλο γίγνεται θεοῦ,
ἣ τήνδε κἀμὲ καὶ δόμους ἀπώλεσεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄιες ὤ, ἔκλυες ὤ
ἀνήκουστα τᾶς
τυράννου πάθεα μέλεα θρεομένας.
ὀλοίμαν ἔγωγε, πρὶν σᾶν, φίλα,
κατανύσαι φρενῶν. ἰώ μοι, φεῦ φεῦ.
ὦ τάλαινα τῶνδ' ἀλγέων·
ὦ πόνοι τρέφοντες βροτούς.
ὄλωλας, ἐξέφηνας εἰς φάος κακά.
τίς σε παναμέριος ὅδε χρόνος μένει;
τελευτάσεταί τι καινὸν δόμοις.
ἄσημα δ' οὐκέτ' ἐστὶν οἷ φθίνει τύχα
Κύπριδος, ὦ τάλαινα παῖ Κρησία.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

Τροιζήνιαι γυναῖκες, αἳ τόδ' ἔσχατον
οἰκεῖτε χώρας Πελοπίας προνώπιον,
ἤδη ποτ' ἄλλως νυκτὸς ἐν μακρῷ χρόνῳ
θνητῶν ἐφρόντισ' ᾗ διέφθαρται βίος.
καί μοι δοκοῦσιν οὐ κατὰ γνώμης φύσιν
πράσσειν κάκιον, ἔστι γὰρ τό γ' εὖ φρονεῖν
πολλοῖσιν, ἀλλὰ τῇδ' ἀθρητέον τόδε·
τὰ χρήστ' ἐπιστάμεσθα καὶ γιγνώσκομεν,

NURSE

Woe, child! What wilt thou say? Thou hast dealt me death!
Friends, 'tis past bearing. I will not endure
To live. O hateful life, loathed light to see!
I'll cast away, yield up, my frame, be rid
Of life by death! Farewell, I am no more.
The virtuous love—not willingly, yet love
The evil. Sure no Goddess Cypris is,
But, if it may be, something more than God,
Who hath ruined her, and me, and all this house.

CHORUS

(*Str. to* 669–79)

Hast thou heard?—the unspeakable tale hast thou hearkened,
The wail of my lady's anguish-throe?
O may I die, ah me! ere I know,
Dear lady, a spirit as thine so darkened.
O misery-burdened, O whelmed in woe!
O troubles that cradle the children of men!
Undone!—all's bared to the daylight's ken.
Ah, weariful season for thee remaining!
Dark looms o'er the household the shadow of doom.
Plain now where the star of thy love is waning,
O hapless daughter of Crete's proud home!

PHAEDRA

Troezenian women, ye which here abide
Upon the utmost march of Pelops' land,
Oft sleepless in the weary-wearing night
Have I mused how the life of men is wrecked.
'Tis not, meseems, through inborn folly of soul
They fare so ill,—discretion dwells at least
With many,—but we thus must look hereon:
That which is good we learn and recognise,

οὐκ ἐκπονοῦμεν δ', οἱ μὲν ἀργίας ὕπο,
οἱ δ' ἡδονὴν προθέντες ἀντὶ τοῦ καλοῦ
ἄλλην τιν'. εἰσὶ δ' ἡδοναὶ πολλαὶ βίου,
μακραί τε λέσχαι καὶ σχολή, τερπνὸν κακόν,
αἰδώς τε. δισσαὶ δ' εἰσίν, ἡ μὲν οὐ κακή,
ἡ δ' ἄχθος οἴκων. εἰ δ' ὁ καιρὸς ἦν σαφής,
οὐκ ἂν δύ' ἤστην ταὔτ' ἔχοντε γράμματα.
ταῦτ' οὖν ἐπειδὴ τυγχάνω φρονοῦσ' ἐγώ,
οὐκ ἔσθ' ὁποίῳ φαρμάκῳ διαφθερεῖν
ἔμελλον, ὥστε τοὔμπαλιν πεσεῖν φρενῶν.
λέξω δὲ καὶ σοὶ τῆς ἐμῆς γνώμης ὁδόν·
ἐπεί μ' ἔρως ἔτρωσεν, ἐσκόπουν ὅπως
κάλλιστ' ἐνέγκαιμ' αὐτόν. ἠρξάμην μὲν οὖν
ἐκ τοῦδε, σιγᾶν τήνδε καὶ κρύπτειν νόσον.
γλώσσῃ γὰρ οὐδὲν πιστόν, ἣ θυραῖα μὲν
φρονήματ' ἀνδρῶν νουθετεῖν ἐπίσταται,
αὐτὴ δ' ὑφ' αὑτῆς πλεῖστα κέκτηται κακά.
τὸ δεύτερον δὲ τὴν ἄνοιαν εὖ φέρειν
τῷ σωφρονεῖν νικῶσα προὐνοησάμην.
τρίτον δ', ἐπειδὴ τοισίδ' οὐκ ἐξήνυτον
Κύπριν κρατῆσαι, κατθανεῖν ἔδοξέ μοι
κράτιστον, οὐδεὶς ἀντερεῖ, βουλευμάτων.
ἐμοὶ γὰρ εἴη μήτε λανθάνειν καλὰ
μήτ' αἰσχρὰ δρώσῃ μάρτυρας πολλοὺς ἔχειν.
τὸ δ' ἔργον ᾔδη τὴν νόσον τε δυσκλεᾶ,
γυνή τε πρὸς τοῖσδ' οὖσ' ἐγίγνωσκον καλῶς,
μίσημα πᾶσιν. ὡς ὄλοιτο παγκάκως
ἥτις πρὸς ἄνδρας ἤρξατ' αἰσχύνειν λέχη
πρώτη θυραίους. ἐκ δὲ γενναίων δόμων
τόδ' ἦρξε θηλείαισι γίγνεσθαι κακόν.
ὅταν γὰρ αἰσχρὰ τοῖσιν ἐσθλοῖσιν δοκῇ,
ἦ κάρτα δόξει τοῖς κακοῖς γ' εἶναι καλά.

Yet practise not the lesson, some from sloth,
And some preferring pleasure in the stead
Of duty. Pleasures many of life there be;
Long gossip, idlesse,—pleasant evils they;
And sense of shame—twofold: no ill the one,
But one bows homes to ruin. Were men's choice clear,
These twain had never borne the selfsame names.

Forasmuch then as I knew this before,
No philtre-spell was like to change mine heart
To make me fall away from this my faith.
Thee will I tell the path my reason trod;—
When love's wound smote me, straight I cast about
How best to bear it; wherefore I began
Thenceforth to hush my moan, to veil my pang.
For the tongue none may trust, which knoweth well
To lesson rebel thoughts of other men,
Yet harboureth countless evils of its own.
Then did I take thought nobly to endure
My folly, triumphing by self-control.

Lastly, when even so I naught availed
To o'ermaster Love's Queen, I resolved to die
As of all counsels best—let none gainsay!
For be it mine to do not good unseen,
Nor ill before a cloud of witnesses.
I knew the deed, the very pang, was shame.
Well knew I too what 'tis to be a woman—
None trust, none love us! Curses upon her
Who showed the way the first to shame the couch
With alien men! Ah, 'twas from princely homes
That first this curse on womankind had birth.
For, when the noble count their shame their good,
The lowly sure will hold it honourable.

μισῶ δὲ καὶ τὰς σώφρονας μὲν ἐν λόγοις,
λάθρᾳ δὲ τόλμας οὐ καλὰς κεκτημένας.
αἳ πῶς ποτ', ὦ δέσποινα ποντία Κύπρι,
βλέπουσιν εἰς πρόσωπα τῶν ξυνευνετῶν
οὐδὲ σκότον φρίσσουσι τὸν ξυνεργάτην
τέραμνά τ' οἴκων μή ποτε φθογγὴν ἀφῇ;
ἡμᾶς γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀποκτείνει, φίλαι,
ὡς μήποτ' ἄνδρα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰσχύνασ' ἁλῶ,
μὴ παῖδας οὓς ἔτικτον· ἀλλ' ἐλεύθεροι
παρρησίᾳ θάλλοντες οἰκοῖεν πόλιν
κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν, μητρὸς εἵνεκ' εὐκλεεῖς.
δουλοῖ γὰρ ἄνδρα, κἂν θρασύσπλαγχνός τις ᾖ,
ὅταν ξυνειδῇ μητρὸς ἢ πατρὸς κακά.
μόνον δὲ τοῦτό φασ' ἁμιλλᾶσθαι βίῳ,
γνώμην δικαίαν κἀγαθήν, ὅτῳ παρῇ.
κακοὺς δὲ θνητῶν ἐξέφην', ὅταν τύχῃ,
προθεὶς κάτοπτρον ὥστε παρθένῳ νέᾳ
χρόνος· παρ' οἷσι μήποτ' ὀφθείην ἐγώ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ σῶφρον ὡς ἁπανταχοῦ καλόν,
καὶ δόξαν ἐσθλὴν ἐν βροτοῖς καρπίζεται.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

δέσποιν', ἐμοί τοι συμφορὰ μὲν ἀρτίως
ἡ σὴ παρέσχε δεινὸν ἐξαίφνης φόβον·
νῦν δ' ἐννοοῦμαι φαῦλος οὖσα· κἀν βροτοῖς
αἱ δεύτεραί πως φροντίδες σοφώτεραι.
οὐ γὰρ περισσὸν οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἔξω λόγου
πέπονθας· ὀργαὶ δ' εἰς σ' ἐπέσκηψαν θεᾶς.
ἐρᾷς·—τί τοῦτο θαῦμα;—σὺν πολλοῖς βροτῶν·
κἄπειτ' ἔρωτος εἵνεκα ψυχὴν ὀλεῖς;
οὔ τἄρα λύει τοῖς ἐρῶσι τῶν πέλας,
ὅσοι τε μέλλουσ', εἰ θανεῖν αὐτοὺς χρεών·

And O, I hate the continent-professed
Which treasure secret recklessness of shame.
How can they, O Queen Cypris, Sea-born One,
Look ever in the faces of their lords,
Nor shudder lest their dark accomplice, night,
And their own bowers may utter forth a voice?

Me—friends, 'tis even this dooms me to die,
That never I be found to shame my lord,
Nor the sons whom I bare: but free, with tongues
Unfettered, flourish they, their home yon burg
Of glorious Athens, blushing ne'er for me.
For this cows man, how stout of heart soe'er,
To know a father's or a mother's sin.
And this alone can breast the shocks of life,
An honest heart and good, in whomso found:
But in his hour Time lifts his mirror, and shows
The vile his vileness there, as a girl sees
Her face. With such may I be never found.

CHORUS

Lo now, how fair is virtue everywhere,
Which yieldeth fruit of good repute mid men!

NURSE

Queen, thine affliction, suddenly revealed
But now, wrought in me terrible dismay.
Yet I discern my folly now. 'Tis strange
How second thoughts for men are wisest still.
Thine is the common lot, not past cool weighing:
The Goddess's passion-bolts have smitten thee.
Thou lov'st—what marvel this?—thou art as many—
And lo, for love's sake wouldst fling life away!
Sooth, 'twere small gain for them which love their
fellows,
Or yet shall love, if help be none save death.

Κύπρις γὰρ οὐ φορητός, ἢν πολλὴ ῥυῇ·
ἣ τὸν μὲν εἴκονθ' ἡσυχῇ μετέρχεται,
ὃν δ' ἂν περισσὸν καὶ φρονοῦνθ' εὕρῃ μέγα,
τοῦτον λαβοῦσα—πῶς δοκεῖς;—καθύβρισεν.
φοιτᾷ δ' ἀν' αἰθέρ', ἔστι δ' ἐν θαλασσίῳ
κλύδωνι Κύπρις, πάντα δ' ἐκ ταύτης ἔφυ·
ἥδ' ἐστὶν ἡ σπείρουσα καὶ διδοῦσ' ἔρον,
οὗ πάντες ἐσμὲν οἱ κατὰ χθόν' ἔκγονοι.
ὅσοι μὲν οὖν γραφάς τε τῶν παλαιτέρων
ἔχουσιν αὐτοί τ' εἰσὶν ἐν μούσαις ἀεί,
ἴσασι μὲν Ζεὺς ὥς ποτ' ἠράσθη γάμων
Σεμέλης, ἴσασι δ' ὡς ἀνήρπασέν ποτε
ἡ καλλιφεγγὴς Κέφαλον εἰς θεοὺς Ἕως
ἔρωτος εἵνεκ'· ἀλλ' ὅμως ἐν οὐρανῷ
ναίουσι κοὐ φεύγουσιν ἐκποδὼν θεούς,
στέργουσι δ', οἶμαι, συμφορᾷ νικώμενοι.
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέξει; χρῆν σ' ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς ἄρα
πατέρα φυτεύειν ἢ 'πὶ δεσπόταις θεοῖς
ἄλλοισιν, εἰ μὴ τούσδε γε στέρξεις νόμους.
πόσους δοκεῖς δὴ κάρτ' ἔχοντας εὖ φρενῶν
νοσοῦνθ' ὁρῶντας λέκτρα μὴ δοκεῖν ὁρᾶν;
πόσους δὲ παισὶ πατέρας ἡμαρτηκόσι
συνεκκομίζειν Κύπριν; ἐν σοφοῖσι γὰρ
τάδ' ἐστὶ θνητῶν, λανθάνειν τὰ μὴ καλά.
οὐδ' ἐκπονεῖν τοι χρῆν βίον λίαν βροτούς·
οὐδὲ στέγην γάρ, ἧς κατηρεφεῖς δοκοί,[1]
κανὼν ἀκριβώσει' ἄν·[2] εἰς δὲ τὴν τύχην
πεσοῦσ' ὅσην σὺ πῶς ἂν ἐκνεῦσαι δοκεῖς;
ἀλλ' εἰ τὰ πλείω χρηστὰ τῶν κακῶν ἔχεις,
ἄνθρωπος οὖσα κάρτα γ' εὖ πράξειας ἄν.

[1] Seidler: for MSS. δόμοι.
[2] Musgrave: for MSS. καλῶς ἀκριβώσειαν.

For Cypris crusheth, swooping in her might;
Yet gently stealeth she on whoso yield.
But whom she findeth wayward, arrogant-souled,
She graspeth, mocketh, past imagining.
Through air she roveth, in the ocean-surge
Is Cypris; all things have their birth of her.
'Tis she that sows love, gives increase thereof,
Whereof all we that dwell on earth are sprung.

Whoso have scrolls writ in the ancient days,
And wander still themselves by paths of song,
They know how Zeus of yore desired the embrace
Of Semele; they know how radiant Dawn
Up to the Gods snatched Cephalus of yore,
And all for love; yet these in Heaven their home
Dwell, neither do they flee the face of Gods,
Content, I trow, to be love's vanquished ones.

Thou—wilt not yield? Thy sire by several treaty
Thee should have gotten, or with other Gods
For lords, if thou wilt bow not to these laws.
How many men, think'st thou, and wise men they,
Knowing their beds dishonoured, shut their eyes?
How many a father in his son's transgression
Playeth love's go-between?—the maxim this
Of wise men, that dishonour be not seen.
Why should men toil to over-perfect life?
Lo, even thine hall's roof-beams the craftsman's rule
Can make not utter-true. How thinkest thou,
Who art plunged in fate's deep sea, to swim to land?
Tush—if more good than evil is in thee,
Who art but human, thou shalt do full well.

ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη παῖ, λῆγε μὲν κακῶν φρενῶν,
λῆξον δ' ὑβρίζουσ'· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλο πλὴν ὕβρις
τάδ' ἐστί, κρείσσω δαιμόνων εἶναι θέλειν·
τόλμα δ' ἐρῶσα· θεὸς ἐβουλήθη τάδε.
νοσοῦσα δ' εὖ πως τὴν νόσον καταστρέφου.
εἰσὶν δ' ἐπῳδαὶ καὶ λόγοι θελκτήριοι·
φανήσεταί τι τῆσδε φάρμακον νόσου.
ἦ τἄρ' ἂν ὀψέ γ' ἄνδρες ἐξεύροιεν ἄν,
εἰ μὴ γυναῖκες μηχανὰς εὑρήσομεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Φαίδρα, λέγει μὲν ἥδε χρησιμώτερα
πρὸς τὴν παροῦσαν συμφοράν, αἰνῶ δὲ σέ.
ὁ δ' αἶνος οὗτος δυσχερέστερος λόγων
τῶν τῆσδε καὶ σοὶ μᾶλλον ἀλγίων κλύειν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

τοῦτ' ἔσθ' ὃ θνητῶν εὖ πόλεις οἰκουμένας
δόμους τ' ἀπόλλυσ', οἱ καλοὶ λίαν λόγοι.
οὐ γάρ τι τοῖσιν ὠσὶ τερπνὰ χρὴ λέγειν,
ἀλλ' ἐξ ὅτου τις εὐκλεὴς γενήσεται.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί σεμνομυθεῖς; οὐ λόγων εὐσχημόνων
δεῖ σ', ἀλλὰ τἀνδρός—ὡς τάχος διοιστέον,
τὸν εὐθὺν ἐξειπόντας ἀμφὶ σοῦ λόγον.
εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν σοι μὴ 'πὶ συμφοραῖς βίος
τοιαῖσδε, σώφρων δ' οὖσ' ἐτύγχανες γυνή,
οὐκ ἄν ποτ' εὐνῆς εἵνεχ' ἡδονῆς τε σῆς
προσῆγον ἄν σε δεῦρο· νῦν δ' ἀγὼν μέγας
σῶσαι βίον σόν, κοὐκ ἐπίφθονον τόδε.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὦ δεινὰ λέξασ', οὐχὶ συγκλήσεις στόμα,
καὶ μὴ μεθήσεις αὖθις αἰσχίστους λόγους;

Nay, darling, from thy deadly thoughts refrain,
And from presumption—sheer presumption this,
That one should wish to be more strong than Gods.
In love, flinch not; a God hath willed this thing.
In pain, victorious wrestle with thy pain.
Lo, charms there be, and words of soothing spell.
Some cure for this affliction shall appear.
Sooth, it were long ere *men* would light thereon,
Except we women find devices forth.

CHORUS

Phaedra, she speaketh words that more avail
For this thine imminent plight: yet thee I praise.
But haply this my praise shall gall thee more
Than those her words, and harsher sound to thee.

PHAEDRA

This is it which doth ruin goodly towns
And homes of men, these speeches over-fair.
It needeth not to speak words sweet to ears,
But those whereby a good name shall be saved.

NURSE

Out on thine high-flown talk! No fair-tricked speech
Will stead thee, but a lover!—'tis high time
To strip disguise off, speak plain truth of thee.
For, were thy life not in such desperate case,
Or thou a woman strong in self-control,
Never for thy lust's sake and pleasure I
To this would bring thee: but we must fight hard
Now for thy life, and void of blame is this.

PHAEDRA

Speaker of horrors!—wilt not seal thy lips?
Wilt not refrain from utter-shameful words?

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

αἴσχρ᾽, ἀλλ᾽ ἀμείνω τῶν καλῶν τάδ᾽ ἐστί σοι.
κρεῖσσον δὲ τοὔργον, εἴπερ ἐκσώσει γέ σε,
ἢ τοὔνομ᾽ ᾧ σὺ κατθανεῖ γαυρουμένη.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

καὶ μή σε πρὸς θεῶν, εὖ λέγεις γάρ, αἰσχρὰ δέ,
πέρα προβῇς τῶνδ᾽· ὡς ὑπείργασμαι μὲν εὖ
ψυχὴν ἔρωτι, τᾀσχρὰ δ᾽ ἢν λέγῃς καλῶς,
εἰς τοῦδ᾽ ὃ φεύγω νῦν ἀναλωθήσομαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

εἴ τοι δοκεῖ σοι, χρῆν μὲν οὔ σ᾽ ἁμαρτάνειν·
εἰ δ᾽ οὖν, πιθοῦ μοι· δευτέρα γὰρ ἡ χάρις.
ἔστιν κατ᾽ οἴκους φίλτρα μοι θελκτήρια
ἔρωτος, ἦλθε δ᾽ ἄρτι μοι γνώμης ἔσω,
ἅ σ᾽ οὔτ᾽ ἐπ᾽ αἰσχροῖς οὔτ᾽ ἐπὶ βλάβῃ φρενῶν
παύσει νόσου τῆσδ᾽, ἢν σὺ μὴ γένῃ κακή.
δεῖ δ᾽ ἐξ ἐκείνου δή τι τοῦ ποθουμένου
σημεῖον, ἢ λόγον τιν᾽ ἢ πέπλων ἄπο
λαβεῖν, συνάψαι τ᾽ ἐκ δυοῖν μίαν χάριν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

πότερα δὲ χριστὸν ἢ ποτὸν τὸ φάρμακον ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ᾽· ὄνασθαι, μὴ μαθεῖν βούλου, τέκνον.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

δέδοιχ᾽ ὅπως μοι μὴ λίαν φανῇς σοφή.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

πάντ᾽ ἂν φοβηθεῖσ᾽ ἴσθι· δειμαίνεις δὲ τί ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

μή μοί τι Θησέως τῶνδε μηνύσῃς τόκῳ.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἔασον, ὦ παῖ· ταῦτ᾽ ἐγὼ θήσω καλῶς.
μόνον σύ μοι, δέσποινα ποντία Κύπρι,

NURSE

Shameful—yet better than the good for thee.
Better this deed, so it but save thy life,
Than that name, whose proud vaunt shall be thy death.

PHAEDRA

No, by the Gods!—foul words are thy fair words!—
No farther go: I have schooled mine heart to endure
This love: but if thou plead shame's cause so fair,
I shall be trapped in that sin which I flee.

NURSE

If such thy mind, thine heart should not have sinned:
But now—obey me:—'tis the one hope left:—
I have within some certain charms to assuage
Love: 'twas but now they came into my thought.
These, not with shame, nor hurt unto thy mind,
Shall lull thy pang, so thou be not faint-hearted.
Howbeit there needs of him thou yearnest for
Some token, or a word, or fragment caught
From vesture, so to knit two loves in one.

PHAEDRA

A salve, or potion, is this charm of thine?

NURSE

I know not: be content with help, not knowledge.

PHAEDRA

I fear lest over-cunning thou shalt prove.

NURSE

Then know thyself all fears. What dreadest thou?

PHAEDRA

Lest thou show aught of this to Theseus' son.

NURSE

Let be, my child: this will I order well.
Only do thou, Queen Cypris, Sea-born One,

συνεργὸς εἴης. τἄλλα δ' οἷ' ἐγὼ φρονῶ
τοῖς ἔνδον ἡμῖν ἀρκέσει λέξαι φίλοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἔρως Ἔρως, ὁ κατ' ὀμμάτων στρ. α'
στάζεις πόθον, εἰσάγων γλυκεῖαν
ψυχᾷ χάριν οὓς ἐπιστρατεύσῃ,
μή μοί ποτε σὺν κακῷ φανείης
μηδ' ἄρρυθμος ἔλθοις.
οὔτε γὰρ πυρὸς οὔτ'
ἄστρων ὑπέρτερον βέλος,
οἷον τὸ τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας
ἵησιν ἐκ χερῶν
Ἔρως ὁ Διὸς παῖς.

ἄλλως ἄλλως παρά τ' Ἀλφεῷ ἀντ. α'
Φοίβου τ' ἐπὶ Πυθίοις τεράμνοις
βούταν φόνον Ἑλλὰς αἶ' ἀέξει·
Ἔρωτα δὲ τὸν τύραννον ἀνδρῶν,
τὸν τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας
φιλτάτων θαλάμων
κληδοῦχον, οὐ σεβίζομεν,
πέρθοντα καὶ διὰ πάσας
ἰόντα συμφορᾶς
θνατοῖς, ὅταν ἔλθῃ.

τὰν μὲν Οἰχαλίᾳ στρ. β'
πῶλον ἄζυγα λέκτρων
ἄνανδρον τὸ πρὶν καὶ ἄνυμφον, οἴκων

Work with me. Whatso else I have in mind
Shall it suffice to speak to friends within.
[*Exit* NURSE.

CHORUS

O Eros, O Eros, how melts love's yearning (*Str.* 1)
From thine eyes, when thy sweet spell witcheth the heart
Of them against whom thou hast marched in [thy might!
Not me, not me for mine hurt do thou smite,
My life's heart-music to discord turning.
For never so hotly the flame-spears dart,
Nor so fleet are the star-shot arrows of light,
As the shaft from thy fingers that speedeth its flight,
As the flame of the Love-queen's bolts fierce- [burning,
O Eros, the child of Zeus who art!

In vain, O in vain by Alpheus the river (*Ant.* 1)
And in Phoebus's Pythian shrine hath the land
Of Hellas the blood of her oxen outpoured.
But Eros, but Love, who is all men's lord,
Unto whom Aphrodite is wont to deliver
Her keys, that the doors be unsealed by his hand
Of her holy of holies, we have not adored,
Though he marcheth through ruin victory-ward,
Though he raineth calamity forth of his quiver
On mortals against his on-coming that stand.

(*Str.* 2)
For I call to remembrance Oechalia's daughter,[1]
Who, ere Love 'neath his tyrannous car-yoke had brought her,
Had been spouseless and free—overseas how she [hasted,

[1] Iole, to win whom Hercules sacked Oechalia.

ζεύξασ' ἀπ' εἰρεσίᾳ,[1] δρομάδα
τὰν Ἄιδος[2] ὥστε Βάκχαν,
σὺν αἵματι, σὺν καπνῷ
φονίοις θ' ὑμεναίοις
Ἀλκμήνας τόκῳ Κύπρις ἐξέδωκεν·
ὦ τλάμων ὑμεναίων.

ὦ Θήβας ἱερὸν — ἀντ. β'
τεῖχος, ὦ στόμα Δίρκας,
συνείποιτ' ἂν ἁ Κύπρις οἷον ἕρπει.
βροντᾷ γὰρ ἀμφιπύρῳ τοκάδα
τὰν Διογόνοιο Βάκχου
νυμφευσαμέναν πότμῳ
φονίῳ κατηύνασεν.
δεινὰ γὰρ πάντα γ' ἐπιπνεῖ, μέλισσα δ'
οἵα τις πεπόταται.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

σιγήσατ', ὦ γυναῖκες· ἐξειργάσμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστι, Φαίδρα, δεινὸν ἐν δόμοισι σοῖς;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἐπίσχετ'· αὐδὴν τῶν ἔσωθεν ἐκμάθω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σιγῶ· τὸ μέντοι φροίμιον κακὸν τόδε.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἰώ μοι, αἰαῖ αἰαῖ·
ὦ δυστάλαινα τῶν ἐμῶν παθημάτων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίνα θροεῖς αὐδάν; τίνα βοᾷς λόγον;
ἔννεπε τίς φοβεῖ σε φάμα, γύναι,
φρένας ἐπίσσυτος.

[1] Matthiae: for ἀπειρεσίαν of MSS.
[2] Musgrave: for ναΐδ' or ἀΐδ' of MSS.

When Cypris the dear yoke of home had disparted,
Like a bacchanal fiend out of hell that had darted,
  And with blood, and with smoke of a palace
    flame-wasted, [chanted,
And with death-shrieks for hymns at her bridal-feast
By Love's Queen to the son of Alcmena was granted—
  Woe, woe for the joys of espousal she tasted!

And ye, O ye ramparts of hallowèd Thebe, (*Ant.* 2)
And ye lips wave-welling of Dirce, might ye be
  Witness how dire was the Love-queen's coming,
When a slumber that knoweth not waking was given
Of her spells by the flame-enfolded levin
  To the mother of Zeus' seed Bacchus: for dooming
Of death had she blent with the bride-chant's singing.
O, the Dread One breatheth on all life, winging
  Softly her flight as a bee low-humming.
[*Voices within*]

PHAEDRA

Hush ye, O hush ye, women! . . . . Lost am I!

CHORUS

What is this dread thing, Phaedra, in thine halls?

PHAEDRA

Peace!—let me hear the voice of them within.

CHORUS

I am dumb: an ominous prelude sure is this.

PHAEDRA

Ah me! ah me! alas!
O wretched, wretched!—ah, mine agonies!

CHORUS

What cry dost thou utter? What word dost thou
  shriek? [speak!
What voice through thy soul thrills terror?—O

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἀπωλόμεσθα. ταῖσδ' ἐπιστᾶσαι πύλαις
ἀκούσαθ' οἷος κέλαδος ἐν δόμοις πίτνει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ παρὰ κλῇθρα· σοὶ μέλει πομπίμα
φάτις δωμάτων.
ἔνεπε δ' ἔνεπέ μοι, τί ποτ' ἔβα κακόν;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὁ τῆς φιλίππου παῖς Ἀμαζόνος βοᾷ
Ἱππόλυτος, αὐδῶν δεινὰ πρόσπολον κακά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀχὰν μὲν κλύω, σαφὲς δ' οὐκ ἔχω·
γεγωνεῖ δ' [1] *ὄπᾳ*
διὰ πύλας ἔμολεν ἔμολε σοὶ βοά.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

καὶ μὴν σαφῶς γε τὴν κακῶν προμνήστριαν,
τὴν δεσπότου προδοῦσαν ἐξαυδᾷ λέχος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὤμοι ἐγὼ κακῶν· προδέδοσαι, φίλα.
τί σοι μήσομαι;
τὰ κρυπτὰ γὰρ πέφηνε, διὰ δ' ὄλλυσαι.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

αἰαῖ, ἒ ἕ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρόδοτος ἐκ φίλων.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἀπώλεσέν μ' εἰποῦσα συμφορὰς ἐμάς,
φίλως, καλῶς δ' οὐ τήνδ' ἰωμένη νόσον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς οὖν; τί δράσεις, ὦ παθοῦσ' ἀμήχανα;

[1] Murray: for *ἔχω γεγώνειν*.

PHAEDRA

I am undone! O stand ye by these doors,
And hear what clamour clasheth in the house.

CHORUS

Nay, thou art thereby: sped forth is the cry from the palace for thee.
O tell me what horror rushed out—tell it me!

PHAEDRA

The son of the Amazon, Hippolytus,
Shouts, hurling fearful curses at mine handmaid.

CHORUS

Yea surely a noise do I hear, yet to me naught soundeth clear:
But to thee through the doors there came, there came
A shout of anger, a cry of shame.

PHAEDRA

Ah clear—ah clear!—yea, pandar of foul sin,
Traitress to her lord's bed, he calleth her.

CHORUS

Woe! Thou art betrayed, belovèd one!
What shall I counsel? Thy secret is bared: thou art wholly undone.

PHAEDRA

Woe's me! ah woe!

CHORUS

From the hand that loved came the traitor's blow.

PHAEDRA

She hath undone me, telling mine affliction:
Her love sought by my shame to heal my pain.

CHORUS

What wilt thou do, O thou in desperate plight?

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἕν, κατθανεῖν ὅσον τάχος
τῶν νῦν παρόντων πημάτων ἄκος μόνον.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ γαῖα μῆτερ ἡλίου τ' ἀναπτυχαί,
οἵων λόγων ἄρρητον εἰσήκουσ' ὄπα.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

σίγησον, ὦ παῖ, πρίν τιν' αἰσθέσθαι βοῆς.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἀκούσας δείν' ὅπως σιγήσομαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ναὶ πρός σε τῆς σῆς δεξιᾶς εὐωλένου.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐ μὴ προσοίσεις χεῖρα μηδ' ἅψει πέπλων ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ πρός σε γονάτων, μηδαμῶς μ' ἐξεργάσῃ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τί δ', εἴπερ ὡς φὴς μηδὲν εἴρηκας κακόν ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὁ μῦθος, ὦ παῖ, κοινὸς οὐδαμῶς ὅδε.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τά τοι κάλ' ἐν πολλοῖσι κάλλιον λέγειν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, ὅρκους μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσῃς.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἡ γλῶσσ' ὀμώμοχ', ἡ δὲ φρὴν ἀνώμοτος.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, τί δράσεις ; σοὺς φίλους διεργάσει ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἀπέπτυσ'· οὐδεὶς ἄδικός ἐστί μοι φίλος.

PHAEDRA

No way save one I know—straightway to die—
The one cure for the ills that compass me.

Enter HIPPOLYTUS, *followed by the* NURSE.

HIPPOLYTUS

O mother Earth, unveilings of the sun,
What words unutterable have I heard!

NURSE

Hush, O my son, ere one have heard thy cry.

HIPPOLYTUS

I have heard horrors—should I hold my peace?

NURSE

Yea, I beseech thee by thy fair right hand.

HIPPOLYTUS

Hence with thine hand!—touch not my vesture thou.

NURSE

Oh, by thy knees, do not—ah, slay me not!

HIPPOLYTUS

How, if thou hast said no wrong, as thou dost say?

NURSE

No tale is this, my son, for all men's ears.

HIPPOLYTUS

Tush, a fair tale is fairer told to the world.

NURSE

My son, thine oath!—dishonour not thine oath.

HIPPOLYTUS

My tongue hath sworn: no oath is on my soul.

NURSE

O son, what wilt thou do?—wilt slay thy friends?

HIPPOLYTUS

Avaunt the word!—no villain is my friend.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

σύγγνωθ'· ἁμαρτεῖν εἰκὸς ἀνθρώπους, τέκνον.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δὴ κίβδηλον ἀνθρώποις κακὸν
γυναῖκας εἰς φῶς ἡλίου κατῴκισας;
εἰ γὰρ βρότειον ἤθελες σπεῖραι γένος,
οὐκ ἐκ γυναικῶν χρῆν παρασχέσθαι τόδε,
ἀλλ' ἀντιθέντας σοῖσιν ἐν ναοῖς βροτοὺς
ἢ χρυσὸν ἢ σίδηρον ἢ χαλκοῦ βάρος
παίδων πρίασθαι σπέρμα, τοῦ τιμήματος
τῆς ἀξίας ἕκαστον· ἐν δὲ δώμασι
ναίειν ἐλευθέροισι θηλειῶν ἄτερ·
[νῦν δ' εἰς δόμους μὲν πρῶτον ἄξεσθαι κακὸν
μέλλοντες ὄλβον δωμάτων ἐκτείνομεν.][1]
τούτῳ δὲ δῆλον ὡς γυνὴ κακὸν μέγα·
προσθεὶς γὰρ ὁ σπείρας τε καὶ θρέψας πατὴρ
φερνὰς ἀπῴκισ', ὡς ἀπαλλαχθῇ κακοῦ·
ὁ δ' αὖ λαβὼν ἀτηρὸν εἰς δόμους φυτὸν
γέγηθε κόσμον προστιθεὶς ἀγάλματι
καλὸν κακίστῳ καὶ πέπλοισιν ἐκπονεῖ
δύστηνος, ὄλβον δωμάτων ὑπεξελών.
ἔχει δ' ἀνάγκην, ὥστε κηδεύσας καλοῖς
γαμβροῖσι χαίρων σῴζεται πικρὸν λέχος,
ἢ χρηστὰ λέκτρα, πενθεροὺς δ' ἀνωφελεῖς
λαβὼν πιέζει τἀγαθῷ τὸ δυστυχές.
ῥᾷστον δ' ὅτῳ τὸ μηδέν, ἀλλ' ἀνωφελὴς
εὐηθίᾳ κατ' οἶκον ἵδρυται γυνή.
σοφὴν δὲ μισῶ· μὴ γὰρ ἔν γ' ἐμοῖς δόμοις
εἴη φρονοῦσα πλεῖον ἢ γυναῖκα χρή.
τὸ γὰρ πανοῦργον μᾶλλον ἐντίκτει Κύπρις
ἐν ταῖς σοφαῖσιν· ἡ δ' ἀμήχανος γυνὴ

[1] 625–6 are generally rejected as spurious.

NURSE

Forgive, son: men are men, they needs must err.

HIPPOLYTUS

Why hast thou given a home beneath the sun,
Zeus, unto woman, specious curse to man?
For, were thy will to raise a mortal seed,
This ought they not of women to have gotten,
But in thy temples should they lay its price,
Or gold, or iron, or a weight of bronze,
And so buy seed of children, every man
After the worth of that his gift, and dwell
Free in free homes unvexed of womankind.

But now—soon as we go about to bring
This bane to the home, we hurl to earth its weal.
Hereby is woman proved a grievous curse—
He, who begat and reared her, banishes,
Yea, adds a dower, to rid him of his bane;
While he which taketh home the noisome weed
Rejoices, decks with goodly bravery
The loathly image, and tricks out with robes,—
Filching away, poor wretch! his household's wealth.
He may not choose: who getteth noble kin
With her, content must stomach his sour feast:
Who getteth a good wife, but worthless kin,
Must muffle up the evil 'neath the good.

Happiest who wins a cipher, in whose halls
A brainless thing is throned in uselessness.
But the keen-witted hate I: in mine house
Ne'er dwell one subtler than is woman's due;
For Cypris better brings to birth her mischief
In clever women: the resourceless 'scapes

γνώμῃ βραχείᾳ μωρίαν ἀφῃρέθη.

χρῆν δ' εἰς γυναῖκα πρόσπολον μὲν οὐ περᾶν,
ἄφθογγα δ' αὐταῖς συγκατοικίζειν δάκη
θηρῶν, ἵν' εἶχον μήτε προσφωνεῖν τινα
μήτ' ἐξ ἐκείνων φθέγμα δέξασθαι πάλιν.
νῦν δ' αἱ μὲν ἔνδον δρῶσιν αἱ κακαὶ κακὰ
βουλεύματ', ἔξω δ' ἐκφέρουσι πρόσπολοι.
ὡς καὶ σύ γ' ἡμῖν πατρός, ὦ κακὸν κάρα,
λέκτρων ἀθίκτων ἦλθες εἰς συναλλαγάς·
ἁγὼ ῥυτοῖς νασμοῖσιν ἐξομόρξομαι,
εἰς ὦτα κλύζων. πῶς ἂν οὖν εἴην κακός,
ὃς οὐδ' ἀκούσας τοιάδ' ἁγνεύειν δοκῶ ;
εὖ δ' ἴσθι, τοὐμόν σ' εὐσεβὲς σῴζει, γύναι·
εἰ μὴ γὰρ ὅρκοις θεῶν ἄφρακτος ᾑρέθην,
οὐκ ἄν ποτ' ἔσχον μὴ οὐ τάδ' ἐξειπεῖν πατρί.
νῦν δ' ἐκ δόμων μέν, ἔστ' ἂν ἔκδημος χθονὸς
Θησεύς, ἄπειμι· σῖγα δ' ἕξομεν στόμα.
θεάσομαι δὲ σὺν πατρὸς μολὼν ποδὶ
πῶς νιν προσόψει καὶ σὺ καὶ δέσποινα σή·
τῆς σῆς δὲ τόλμης εἴσομαι γεγευμένος.

ὄλοισθε. μισῶν δ' οὔποτ' ἐμπλησθήσομαι
γυναῖκας, οὐδ' εἴ φησί τίς μ' ἀεὶ λέγειν·
ἀεὶ γὰρ οὖν πώς εἰσι κἀκεῖναι κακαί.
ἤ νύν τις αὐτὰς σωφρονεῖν διδαξάτω,
ἢ κἄμ' ἐάτω ταῖσδ' ἐπεμβαίνειν ἀεί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάλανες ὦ κακοτυχεῖς — ἀντ.
γυναικῶν πότμοι.
τίν' αὖ νῦν τέχναν ἔχομεν ἢ λόγους
σφαλεῖσαι κάθαμμα λύειν λόγου ;

That folly by the short-weight of her wit.

Handmaids should ne'er have had access to wives,
But brutes, with teeth, no tongue, should dwell with them,
That so they might not speak to any one,
Nor win an answering word from such as these.
But now the vile ones weave vile plots within,
And out of doors their handmaids bear the web:
As thou hast come, foul quean, to tender me
Commerce in mine own father's sacred couch!—
Words that with fountain-streams I'll wash away,
Sluicing mine ears. How should I be so vile,
Who even with hearing count myself defiled?
Woman, I fear God: know, that saveth thee.
For, had I not by oaths been trapped unwares,
I had ne'er forborne to tell this to my sire.
Now from mine home, while Theseus yet is far,
I go, and I will keep my lips from speech.
But—with my father I return, to see
How thou wilt meet his eye, thou and thy mistress,
And so have taste of thy full shamelessness.

Curse ye! My woman-hate shall ne'er be sated,
Not though one say that this is all my theme:
For they be ever strangely steeped in sin.
Let some one now stand forth and prove them chaste,
Or leave me free to trample on them ever. [*Exit.*

CHORUS

(*Ant. to* 362-72)

O drear dark doom that on women hath lighted!
By what cunning of pleading, when feet once trip,
Shall we loose the accuser's iron grip?

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἐτύχομεν δίκας· ἰὼ γᾶ καὶ φῶς.
πᾷ ποτ' ἐξαλύξω τύχας;
πῶς δὲ πῆμα κρύψω, φίλαι;
τίς ἂν θεῶν ἀρωγὸς ἢ τίς ἂν βροτῶν
πάρεδρος ἢ ξυνεργὸς ἀδίκων ἔργων
φανείη; τὸ γὰρ παρ' ἡμῖν πάθος
παρὸν δυσεκπέρατον ἔρχεται βίου.
κακοτυχεστάτα γυναικῶν ἐγώ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· πέπρακται, κοὐ κατώρθωνται τέχναι,
δέσποινα, τῆς σῆς προσπόλου, κακῶς δ' ἔχει.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὦ παγκακίστη καὶ φίλων διαφθορεῦ,
οἷ' εἰργάσω με. Ζεύς σε γεννήτωρ ἐμὸς
πρόρριζον ἐκτρίψειεν οὐτάσας πυρί.
οὐκ εἶπον, οὐ σῆς προὐνοησάμην φρενός,
σιγᾶν ἐφ' οἷσι νῦν ἐγὼ κακύνομαι;
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέσχου· τοιγὰρ οὐκέτ' εὐκλεεῖς
θανούμεθ'. ἀλλὰ δεῖ με δὴ καινῶν λόγων.
οὗτος γὰρ ὀργῇ συντεθηγμένος φρένας
ἐρεῖ καθ' ἡμῶν πατρὶ σὰς ἁμαρτίας,
ἐρεῖ δὲ Πιτθεῖ τῷ γέροντι συμφοράς,
πλήσει δὲ πᾶσαν γαῖαν αἰσχίστων λόγων.
ὄλοιο καὶ σὺ χὤστις ἄκοντας φίλους
πρόθυμός ἐστι μὴ καλῶς εὐεργετεῖν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

δέσποιν', ἔχεις μὲν τἀμὰ μέμψασθαι κακά·
τὸ γὰρ δάκνον σου τὴν διάγνωσιν κρατεῖ·
ἔχω δὲ κἀγὼ πρὸς τάδ', εἰ δέξει, λέγειν.
ἔθρεψά σ' εὔνους τ' εἰμί· τῆς νόσου δέ σοι
ζητοῦσα φάρμαχ' ηὗρον οὐχ ἁβουλόμην.

PHAEDRA

O earth, O sun, I am justly requited!
Through the snares of calamity how shall I slip?
How, friends, shall I cloke my woe, how hide?
What God or what man shall stand forth on my side,
Shall consent in my sin to be made partaker?
For all life's anguish, and all life's shame
Are upon me, and whelm like a shipwrecking breaker!
Most accurst of my fate among women I am.

CHORUS

Woe, woe! 'Tis done. Queen, it hath naught availed,
Thy bower-maid's device: 'tis ruin all.

PHAEDRA

Vilest of vile! destroyer of thy friends!
How hast thou ruined me! May Zeus my sire
Smite thee with flame, blast thee to nothingness!
Did I not tell thee— not divine thy purpose?—
To speak not that whereby I am now dishonoured?
But thou wouldst not forbear. I shall not now
Even die unshamed! (*A pause*)
Some new plea must I find.
For yonder boy with soul keen-edged with wrath
Shall to his sire accuse me of thy sin,
Shall tell to agèd Pittheus my mischance,
Shall blaze the shameful tale through every land.
Curses on thee, and whoso thrusteth in
To do base service to unwilling friends!

NURSE

Mistress, thou mayst revile mine evil work,
For rankling pain bears thy discernment down:
Yet somewhat might I answer, wouldst thou hear.
I nursed thee, loved thee, sought for thy disease
A healing balm,—and found not that I would.

εἰ δ' εὖ γ' ἔπραξα, κάρτ' ἂν ἐν σοφοῖσιν ἦ.
πρὸς τὰς τύχας γὰρ τὰς φρένας κεκτήμεθα.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἦ γὰρ δίκαια ταῦτα κἀξαρκοῦντά μοι,
τρώσασαν ἡμᾶς εἶτα συγχωρεῖν λόγοις;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

μακρηγοροῦμεν· οὐκ ἐσωφρόνουν ἐγώ,
ἀλλ' ἔστι κἀκ τῶνδ' ὥστε σωθῆναι, τέκνον.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

παῦσαι λέγουσα· καὶ τὰ πρὶν γὰρ οὐ καλῶς
παρῄνεσάς μοι κἀπεχείρησας κακά.
ἀλλ' ἐκποδὼν ἄπελθε καὶ σαυτῆς πέρι
φρόντιζ'· ἐγὼ δὲ τἀμὰ θήσομαι καλῶς.
ὑμεῖς δέ, παῖδες εὐγενεῖς Τροιζήνιαι,
τοσόνδε μοι παράσχετ' ἐξαιτουμένῃ,
σιγῇ καλύπτειν ἁνθάδ' εἰσηκούσατε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄμνυμι σεμνὴν Ἄρτεμιν Διὸς κόρην,
μηδὲν κακῶν σῶν εἰς φάος δείξειν ποτέ.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

καλῶς ἔλεξας. ἓν δὲ † προστρέπουσ' † ἐγὼ
ηὕρηκα δῆτα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς ἄκος,
ὥστ' εὐκλεᾶ μὲν παισὶ προσθεῖναι βίον,
αὐτή δ' ὄνασθαι πρὸς τὰ νῦν πεπτωκότα.
οὐ γάρ ποτ' αἰσχυνῶ γε Κρησίους δόμους,
οὐδ' εἰς πρόσωπον Θησέως ἀφίξομαι
αἰσχροῖς ἐπ' ἔργοις εἵνεκα ψυχῆς μιᾶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μέλλεις δὲ δή τι δρᾶν ἀνήκεστον κακόν;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

θανεῖν· ὅπως δέ, τοῦτ' ἐγὼ βουλεύσομαι.

Had I sped well, right wise had I been held;
For, as we speed, so is our wisdom's fame.

PHAEDRA

Ha! is this just?—should this suffice me now,
To have stabbed me, and then close in strife of words?

NURSE

We waste the time in speech. I was not wise.
Yet even from this there is escape, my child.

PHAEDRA

Peace to thy talk. Thy counsel heretofore
Was shame, and mischief thine endeavour was.
Hence from my sight: for thine own self take thought.
I with my needs will deal—and honourably.
[*Exit* NURSE.
But ye, O Troezen's daughters nobly born,
Grant to my supplication this, but this—
With silence veil what things ye here have heard.

CHORUS

I swear by reverend Artemis, Zeus' child,
Never to bare to light of thine ills aught.

PHAEDRA

Thou hast well said. Now, as I muse, I find
One refuge, one, from this calamity,
So to bequeath my sons a life of honour,
And what I may from this day's ruin save.
For never will I shame the halls of Crete,
Nor will I meet the face of Theseus ever,
For one poor life's sake, after all this shame.

CHORUS

Ah, wilt thou do a deed of ill past cure?

PHAEDRA

Die will I. How—for this will I take thought.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὔφημος ἴσθι.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

καὶ σύ γ' εὖ με νουθέτει.
ἐγὼ δὲ Κύπριν, ἥπερ ἐξόλλυσί με,
ψυχῆς ἀπαλλαχθεῖσα τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
τέρψω· πικροῦ δ' ἔρωτος ἡσσηθήσομαι.
ἀτὰρ κακόν γε χἀτέρῳ γενήσομαι
θανοῦσ', ἵν' εἰδῇ μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς
ὑψηλὸς εἶναι· τῆς νόσου δὲ τῆσδέ μοι
κοινῇ μετασχὼν σωφρονεῖν μαθήσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἠλιβάτοις ὑπὸ κευθμῶσι γενοίμαν, στρ. α'
ἵνα με πτεροῦσσαν ὄρνιν
θεὸς εἰνὶ ποταναῖς ἀγέλαις θείη·
ἀρθείην δ' ἐπὶ πόντιον
κῦμα τᾶς 'Αδριηνᾶς
ἀκτᾶς 'Ηριδανοῦ θ' ὕδωρ·
ἔνθα πορφύρεον σταλάσσουσ'
εἰς οἶδμα πατρὸς τριτάλαιναι
κόραι Φαέθοντος οἴκτῳ δακρύων
τὰς ἠλεκτροφαεῖς αὐγάς.

'Εσπερίδων δ' ἐπὶ μηλόσπορον ἀκτὰν ἀντ. α'
ἀνύσαιμι τᾶν ἀοιδῶν,
ἵν' ὁ ποντομέδων πορφυρέας λίμνας
ναύταις οὐκέθ' ὁδὸν νέμει,
σεμνὸν τέρμονα κύρων
οὐρανοῦ, τὸν "Ατλας ἔχει,
κρῆναί τ' ἀμβρόσιαι χέονται
Ζανὸς μελάθρων παρὰ κοίταις,
ἵν' ἁ βιόδωρος αὔξει ζαθέα
χθὼν εὐδαιμονίαν θεοῖς.

CHORUS

Ah hush!

PHAEDRA

O yea, advise me wisely thou!
But I shall gladden Cypris my destroyer
By fleeting out of life on this same day,
And vanquished so by bitter love shall be.
Yet in my death will I become the bane
Of one beside, that he may triumph not
Over my woes, and, taking of my pain,
His share, may learn sound wisdom's temperance.

[*Exit* PHAEDRA.

CHORUS

Under the arched cliffs O were I lying, (*Str.* 1)
That there to a bird might a God change me,
And afar mid the flocks of the winged things flying
Over the swell of the Adrian sea
I might soar—and soar,—upon poised wings dreaming,
O'er the strand where Eridanus' waters be,
Where down to the sea-swell purple-gleaming
The tears of the Sun-god's daughters are streaming,
Of the thrice-sad sisters for Phaëthon sighing,
Star-flashes of strange tears amber-beaming!

(*Ant.* 1)

O to win to the strand where the apples are growing
Of the Hesperid chanters kept in ward,
Where the path over Ocean purple-glowing
By the Sea's Lord is to the seafarer barred!
O to light where Atlas hath aye in his keeping
The bourn twixt earth and the heavens bestarred,
Where the fountains ambrosial sunward are leaping
By the couches where Zeus in his halls lieth sleeping,
Where the bounty of Earth the life-bestowing
The bliss of the Gods ever higher is heaping!

ὦ λευκόπτερε Κρησία *στρ. β′*
πορθμίς, ἃ διὰ πόντιον
κῦμ' ἁλίκτυπον ἅλμας
ἐπόρευσας ἐμὰν ἄνασσαν
ὀλβίων ἀπ' οἴκων,
κακονυμφοτάταν ὄνασιν.
ἦ γὰρ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων
ἁ Κρησίας ἐκ γᾶς δύσορνις
ἔπτατ' ἐπὶ κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας,
Μουνίχου δ' ἀκταῖσιν ἐκδή-
σαντο πλεκτὰς πεισμάτων ἀρ-
χὰς ἐπ' ἀπείρου τε γᾶς ἔβασαν.

ἀνθ' ὧν οὐχ ὁσίων ἐρώ- *ἀντ. β′*
των δεινᾷ φρένας Ἀφροδί-
τας νόσῳ κατεκλάσθη·
χαλεπᾷ δ' ὑπέραντλος οὖσα
συμφορᾷ, τεράμνων
ἀπὸ νυμφιδίων κρεμαστὸν
ἅψεται ἀμφὶ βρόχον
λευκᾷ καθαρμόζουσα δείρᾳ,
δαίμονα στυγνὰν καταιδε-
σθεῖσα, τάν τ' εὔδοξον ἀνθαι-
ρουμένα φάμαν, ἀπαλλάσ-
σουσά τ' ἀλγεινὸν φρενῶν ἔρωτα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ (*ἔσωθεν*)

ἰοὺ ἰού·
βοηδρομεῖτε πάντες οἱ πέλας δόμων·
ἐν ἀγχόναις δέσποινα, Θησέως δάμαρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, πέπρακται· βασιλὶς οὐκέτ' ἔστι δὴ
γυνή, κρεμαστοῖς ἐν βρόχοις ἠρτημένη.

(*Str.* 2)

O white-winged galley from Crete's far shore,
Whose keel over deep-sea surges speeding,
Through their flying brine and their battle-roar,
Onward and onward my lady bore,
From a bliss-fraught palace a princess leading
To the joy of a bridal of woe exceeding!—
For, a bird ill-boding, thy sail flitted o'er
With the curse of the Cretan land unto Athens'
glorious strand,
Till the seafarers lashed to the beach Munychian
the hawser-band,
And sprang unto earth's firm floor.

Wherefore, with love-pangs all unblest (*Ant.* 2)
For her gift, entered in Aphrodite, wringing
Her heart-strings asunder, a fearful guest.
Like a wrecked ship sinking, disaster-oppressed
Over her bride-bower's rafters flinging
The noose, shall she cast the coil close-clinging
Round the neck that was whitest and loveliest,
Because that with shuddering shame she shrank from
a loathèd name,
And she chose, in its stead, the stainless renown of
a wife's fair fame,
And, for anguish of love, heart-rest.

[*A cry within*]

Run to the rescue, all ye nigh the house!
In the strangling noose is Theseus' wife, our mistress!

CHORUS

Woe! Woe! 'Tis done! No more—no more is she,
The queen—in yon noose rafter-hung upcaught!

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

οὐ σπεύσετ᾽; οὐκ οἴσει τις ἀμφιδέξιον
σίδηρον, ᾧ τόδ᾽ ἅμμα λύσομεν δέρης;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α′

φίλαι, τί δρῶμεν; ἦ δοκεῖ περᾶν δόμους
λῦσαί τ᾽ ἄνασσαν ἐξ ἐπισπαστῶν βρόχων;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β′

τί δ᾽; οὐ πάρεισι πρόσπολοι νεανίαι;
τὸ πολλὰ πράσσειν οὐκ ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ βίου.

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

ὀρθώσατ᾽ ἐκτείνοντες ἄθλιον νέκυν,
πικρὸν τόδ᾽ οἰκούρημα δεσπόταις ἐμοῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄλωλεν ἡ δύστηνος, ὡς κλύω, γυνή·
ἤδη γὰρ ὡς νεκρόν νιν ἐκτείνουσι δή.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

γυναῖκες, ἴστε τίς ποτ᾽ ἐν δόμοις βοή;
ἠχὴ βαρεῖα προσπόλων μ᾽ ἀφίκετο.
οὐ γάρ τί μ᾽ ὡς θεωρὸν ἀξιοῖ δόμος
πύλας ἀνοίξας εὐφρόνως προσεννέπειν.
μῶν Πιτθέως τι γῆρας εἴργασται νέον;
πρόσω μὲν ἤδη βίοτος, ἀλλ᾽ ὅμως ἔτ᾽ ἂν
λυπηρὸς ἡμῖν τούσδ᾽ ἂν ἐκλίποι δόμους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εἰς γέροντας ἥδε σοι τείνει τύχη,
Θησεῦ· νέοι θανόντες ἀλγυνοῦσί σε.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἴμοι· τέκνων μοι μή τι συλᾶται βίος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ζῶσιν, θανούσης μητρὸς ὡς ἄλγιστά σοι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί φής; ὄλωλεν ἄλοχος; ἐκ τίνος τύχης;

[*Cry within.*]
O haste!—will no one bring the steel two-edged,
Wherewith to loose this cincture of her neck?

SEMI-CHORUS 1

What shall we do, friends? Deem ye we should pass
The doors, and from the halter loose the queen?

SEMI-CHORUS 2

Wherefore? Are no young handmaids at her side?
The busy meddler treadeth perilous paths.

[*Cry within.*]
Uncramp the limbs, streak out the hapless corpse.
Bitter house-warding this is for my lords!

CHORUS

Dead is the woeful lady, by that cry:
Even now they streak her as a corpse is streaked.

Enter THESEUS.

THESEUS

Women, know ye what means this cry within?
A dolorous shriek of handmaids reached mine ears;
Nor deigns the house to open doors and greet me
Blithely, as from the oracle come home.
Hath aught untoward happed to Pittheus' eld?
Well-stricken in years is he, yet dole were ours
If haply fare his feet from these halls forth.

CHORUS

Not to the old pertains this thy mischance,
Theseus: the young have died, for grief to thee.

THESEUS

Woe!—is a child's life by the spoiler reft?

CHORUS

They live, their mother dead—alas for thee!

THESEUS

What say'st thou?—dead—my wife? By what mishap?

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βρόχον κρεμαστὸν ἀγχόνης ἀνήψατο.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

λύπῃ παχνωθεῖσ᾿, ἢ ἀπὸ συμφορᾶς τίνος ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοσοῦτον ἴσμεν· ἄρτι γὰρ κἀγὼ δόμοις,
Θησεῦ, πάρειμι σῶν κακῶν πενθήτρια.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

αἰαῖ· τί δῆτα τοῖσδ᾿ ἀνέστεμμαι κάρα
πλεκτοῖσι φύλλοις, δυστυχὴς θεωρὸς ὤν ;
χαλᾶτε κλῇθρα, πρόσπολοι, πυλωμάτων,
ἐκλύεθ᾿ ἁρμούς, ὡς ἴδω πικρὰν θέαν
γυναικός, ἥ με κατθανοῦσ᾿ ἀπώλεσεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰὼ τάλαινα μελέων κακῶν·
ἔπαθες, εἰργάσω
τοσοῦτον ὥστε τούσδε συγχέαι δόμους.
αἰαῖ τόλμας, βιαίως θανοῦσ᾿
ἀνοσίῳ τε συμφορᾷ, σᾶς χερὸς
πάλαισμα μελέας.
τίς ἄρα σάν, τάλαιν᾿, ἀμαυροῖ ζωάν ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὤμοι ἐγὼ πόνων· ἔπαθον, ὦ πόλις, στρ.
τὰ μάκιστ᾿ ἐμῶν κακῶν. ὦ τύχα,
ὥς μοι βαρεῖα καὶ δόμοις ἐπεστάθης,
κηλὶς ἄφραστος ἐξ ἀλαστόρων τινός.
κατακονὰ μὲν οὖν ἀβίοτος βίου·
κακῶν δ᾿ ὦ τάλας πέλαγος εἰσορῶ
τοσοῦτον ὥστε μήποτ᾿ ἐκνεῦσαι πάλιν,
μηδ᾿ ἐκπερᾶσαι κῦμα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς.

CHORUS

The strangling noose about her neck she coiled.

THESEUS

By grief's touch frozen, or of what affliction?

CHORUS

No more I know, for to thine halls but now,
Theseus, I came, o'er these thine ills to mourn.

THESEUS

Woe! with these wreathèd leaves why is mine head
Crowned—ill-starred harbinger of oracles?
Shoot back the bolts, my servants, of the doors:
Loose bars, that I may see this bitter sight,
My wife, who hath destroyed me by her death.

The palace is thrown open, and the corpse of PHAEDRA *disclosed, with her handmaids grouped round it.*

CHORUS

Woe for thy misery! Woe for thine ills, who hast
suffered and wrought
Such a thing as in ruin shall whelm thine home!
Ah for thy desperate deed, who by violence un-
hallowed hast sought [wrestler hast caught!
Death, who with hand despairing the all-quelling
Who shroudeth thy life, O hapless, in gloom?

THESEUS

(*Str.*)

Ah me for my woes!—I have suffered calamity, great,
O my people, beyond all other!—O foot of fate,
How hast thou heavily trampled me and mine,
Unlooked-for blight from some avenging fiend—
Nay, but destruction that blasteth my life evermore!
On a sea of disaster I look, on a sea without shore,
So vast, that never can I swim thereout,
Nor ride the surge of this calamity.

τίνα λόγον τάλας, τίνα τύχαν σέθεν
βαρύποτμον, γύναι, προσαυδῶν τύχω ;
ὄρνις γὰρ ὥς τις ἐκ χερῶν ἄφαντος εἶ,
πήδημ' ἐς Ἅιδου κραιπνὸν ὁρμήσασά μοι.
αἰαῖ αἰαῖ, μέλεα μέλεα τάδε πάθη.
πρόσωθεν δέ ποθεν ἀνακομίζομαι
τύχαν δαιμόνων
ἀμπλακίαισι τῶν πάροιθέν τινος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐ σοὶ τάδ', ὦναξ, ἦλθεν μόνῳ κακά·
πολλῶν μετ' ἄλλων δ' ὤλεσας κεδνὸν λέχος.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τὸ κατὰ γᾶς θέλω, τὸ κατὰ γᾶς κνέφας ἀντ.
μετοικεῖν σκότῳ θανὼν ὁ τλάμων,
τῆς σῆς στερηθεὶς φιλτάτης ὁμιλίας·
ἀπώλεσας γὰρ μᾶλλον ἢ κατέφθισο.
†τίνος κλύω ; πόθεν θανάσιμος τύχα,
γύναι, σὰν ἔβα τάλαινα καρδίαν ;†
εἴποι τις ἂν τὸ πραχθέν, ἢ μάτην ὄχλον
στέγει τύραννον δῶμα προσπόλων ἐμῶν ;
ὤμοι μοι σέθεν * * * * * *
μέλεος, οἷον εἶδον ἄλγος δόμων,
οὐ τλητὸν οὐδὲ ῥητόν· ἀλλ' ἀπωλόμην·
ἔρημος οἶκος, καὶ τέκν' ὀρφανεύεται.
ἔλιπες ἔλιπες, ὦ φίλα
γυναικῶν ἀρίστα θ' ὁπόσας ἐφορᾷ
φέγγος ἀελίου τε καὶ
νυκτὸς ἀστερωπὸν σέλας.

What word can I speak unto thee ?—how name, dear wife,
The doom that on thee hath descended and crushed [thy life ?
Like a bird hast thou fleeted from mine hands,
And with swift leap hast rushed to Hades' halls.
Never sorrow of sorrows was like unto mine.
On mine head have I gathered the load
Of the far-off sins of an ancient line;
And this is the vengeance of God.

CHORUS

Not to thee only, king, this grief hath come;
With many more a dear wife's loss thou sharest.

THESEUS

(*Ant.*)

In the darkness under the earth—ah me, to have died,
That in blackness of deep gloom under the earth I might hide,
Who am reft of thy most dear companionship!
Oh, thou hast dealt worse death than thou hast suffered!
Of whom shall I hear whence came it, the deadly stroke
Of doom, that the heart of thee, my belovèd, broke?
Will none speak what befell ?—or all for naught
Doth this my palace roof a menial throng?
Woe's me, my belovèd, stricken because of thee!
Ah for the grief of mine house, for the travail I see,
Past utterance, past endurance !—lost am I:
Mine house is desolate, motherless my babes.
O my darling, my wife, thou art gone, thou art gone,
O best upon whom the light
Looketh down of the all-beholding sun,
Or the splendour of star-eyed night!

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάλας, ὢ τάλας· ὅσον κακὸν ἔχει δόμος.
δάκρυσί μου βλέφαρα
καταχυθέντα τέγγεται σᾷ τύχᾳ·
τὸ δ' ἐπὶ τῷδε πῆμα φρίσσω πάλαι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἔα ἔα·
τί δή ποθ' ἥδε δέλτος ἐκ φίλης χερὸς
ἠρτημένη; θέλει τι σημῆναι νέον;
ἀλλ' ἦ λέχους μοι καὶ τέκνων ἐπιστολὰς
ἔγραψεν ἡ δύστηνος ἐξαιτουμένη;
θάρσει, τάλαινα· λέκτρα γὰρ τὰ Θησέως
οὐκ ἔστι δῶμά θ' ἥτις εἴσεισιν γυνή.
καὶ μὴν τύποι γε σφενδόνης χρυσηλάτου
τῆς οὐκέτ' οὔσης τῆσδε προσσαίνουσί με.
φέρ', ἐξελίξας περιβολὰς σφραγισμάτων
ἴδω τί λέξαι δέλτος ἥδε μοι θέλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τόδ' αὖ νεοχμὸν ἐκδοχαῖς
ἐπιφέρει θεὸς κακόν. ἐμοί γ' ἂν[1] *οὖν*
ἀβίοτος βίου τύχα πρὸς τὸ κρανθὲν εἴη τυχεῖν.
ὀλομένους γάρ, οὐκέτ' ὄντας λέγω,
φεῦ φεῦ, τῶν ἐμῶν τυράννων δόμους·
ὦ δαῖμον, εἴ πως ἔστι, μὴ σφήλῃς δόμους,
αἰτουμένης δὲ κλῦθί μου· πρὸς γάρ τινος
οἰωνὸν ὥστε μάντις εἰσορῶ κακόν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἴμοι· τόδ' οἷον ἄλλο πρὸς κακῷ κακόν,
οὐ τλητὸν οὐδὲ λεκτόν. ὢ τάλας ἐγώ.

[1] Paley's suggestion for MSS. *μὲν*.

CHORUS

Alas for thee, and thine house's burden of ill!
With ruth for thy fate running o'er do mine eyes
 the tear-drops pour:
[*Aside*] But for woe which must follow I shudder
 and shudder still.

THESEUS

Ha!
What is this tablet, what, to her dear hand
Fastened? Would'st fain speak some word unsaid?
Now hath she writ, unhappy one, to pray
Touching my marriage or my children aught?
Fear not, lost love: the woman is not born
Shall lie in Theseus' couch, or tread his halls.
Lo, how the impress of the carven gold
Of her that is no more smiles up at me!
Come, let me uncoil the seal's envelopings,
And see what would this tablet say to me.

CHORUS

Woe, woe! How God bringeth evil following hard
 on the track
 Of evil! I count for living unmeet
The lot of a life such as this, as on deeds that are
 wrought I look back: [but in ruin and wrack
For the house of my lords standeth not any more,
 I behold it hurled from its ancient seat.
 Ah God, if this may be, wreck not the house,
 But hearken my beseeching, for I trace,
 Seer-like, an evil omen from his face.

THESEUS

Ah me!—a new curse added to the old,
Past utterance, past endurance! Woe is me!

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί χρῆμα; λέξον, εἴ τί μοι λόγου μέτα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

βοᾷ βοᾷ δέλτος ἄλαστα. πᾷ φύγω
βάρος κακῶν; ἀπὸ γὰρ ὀλόμενος οἴχομαι,
οἷον οἷον εἶδον ἐν γραφαῖς μέλος
φθεγγόμενον τλάμων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ, κακῶν ἀρχηγὸν ἐκφαίνεις λόγον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τόδε μὲν οὐκέτι στόματος ἐν πύλαις
καθέξω δυσεκπέρατον, ὀλοὸν
κακόν· ἰὼ πόλις.
Ἱππόλυτος εὐνῆς τῆς ἐμῆς ἔτλη θιγεῖν
βίᾳ, τὸ σεμνὸν Ζηνὸς ὄμμ' ἀτιμάσας.
ἀλλ' ὦ πάτερ Πόσειδον, ἃς ἐμοί ποτε
ἀρὰς ὑπέσχου τρεῖς, μιᾷ κατέργασαι
τούτων ἐμὸν παῖδ', ἡμέραν δὲ μὴ φύγοι
τήνδ', εἴπερ ἡμῖν ὤπασας σαφεῖς ἀράς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄναξ, ἀπεύχου ταῦτα πρὸς θεῶν πάλιν·
γνώσει γὰρ αὖθις ἀμπλακών. ἐμοὶ πιθοῦ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἔστι· καὶ πρός γ' ἐξελῶ σφε τῆσδε γῆς,
δυοῖν δὲ μοίραιν θατέρᾳ πεπλήξεται·
ἢ γὰρ Ποσειδῶν αὐτὸν εἰς Ἅιδου πύλας
θανόντα πέμψει τὰς ἐμὰς ἀρὰς σέβων,
ἢ τῆσδε χώρας ἐκπεσὼν ἀλώμενος
ξένην ἐπ' αἶαν λυπρὸν ἀντλήσει βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὅδ' αὐτὸς παῖς σὸς εἰς καιρὸν πάρα,
Ἱππόλυτος· ὀργῆς δ' ἐξανεὶς κακῆς, ἄναξ
Θησεῦ, τὸ λῷστον σοῖσι βούλευσαι δόμοις.

CHORUS

What is it? Speak, if I may share the tale.

THESEUS

It shrieketh,—ah, horrors the tablet outshrieketh!
O how can I flee
My burden of woes! I am utterly ruin-sped!
What incantation of curses is this I have read
Graved on the wax—woe's me!

CHORUS

Alas! thou utterest speech that heralds ill.

THESEUS

No more within my lips' gates will I pen
The horror that chokes utterance—O my people,
Hippolytus hath dared assail my bed
With violence, flouting Zeus's awful eye! . . . . .
Father Poseidon, thou didst promise me
Three curses once. Do thou with one of these
Destroy my son: may he not 'scape this day,
If soothfast curses thou hast granted me.

CHORUS

Oh, for the Gods' sake, King, recall this prayer!
Thou yet shalt know thine error: yield to me.

THESEUS

Never! Yea, I will drive him from the land;
And, of two dooms, with one shall he be scourged:—
Either Poseidon, reverencing my prayers,
Shall slay and speed him unto Hades' halls,
Or, banished from this land, a vagabond
On strange shores shall he drain life's bitter dregs.

CHORUS

Lo, where thy son's self comes in season meet,
Hippolytus: refrain thy wrath, O king
Theseus, and for thine house the best devise.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

κραυγῆς ἀκούσας σῆς ἀφικόμην, πάτερ,
σπουδῇ· τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἐφ' ᾧ τὰ νῦν στένεις
οὐκ οἶδα, βουλοίμην δ' ἂν ἐκ σέθεν κλύειν.
ἔα, τί χρῆμα; σὴν δάμαρθ' ὁρῶ, πάτερ,
νεκρόν· μεγίστου θαύματος τόδ' ἄξιον·
ἣν ἀρτίως ἔλειπον, ἣ φάος τόδε
οὔπω χρόνον παλαιὸν εἰσεδέρκετο.
τί χρῆμα πάσχει; τῷ τρόπῳ διόλλυται,
πάτερ, πυθέσθαι βούλομαι σέθεν πάρα.
σιγᾷς; σιωπῆς δ' οὐδὲν ἔργον ἐν κακοῖς·
ἡ γὰρ ποθοῦσα πάντα καρδία κλύειν
κἀν τοῖς κακοῖσι λίχνος οὖσ' ἁλίσκεται.
οὐ μὴν φίλους γε κἄτι μᾶλλον ἢ φίλους
κρύπτειν δίκαιον σάς, πάτερ, δυσπραξίας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ πόλλ' ἁμαρτάνοντες ἄνθρωποι μάτην,
τί δὴ τέχνας μὲν μυρίας διδάσκετε
καὶ πάντα μηχανᾶσθε κἀξευρίσκετε,
ἓν δ' οὐκ ἐπίστασθ' οὐδ' ἐθηράσασθέ πω,
φρονεῖν διδάσκειν οἷσιν οὐκ ἔνεστι νοῦς;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

δεινὸν σοφιστὴν εἶπας, ὅστις εὖ φρονεῖν
τοὺς μὴ φρονοῦντας δυνατός ἐστ' ἀναγκάσαι.
ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἐν δέοντι λεπτουργεῖς, πάτερ,
δέδοικα μή σου γλῶσσ' ὑπερβάλῃ κακοῖς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

φεῦ, χρῆν βροτοῖσι τῶν φίλων τεκμήριον
σαφές τι κεῖσθαι καὶ διάγνωσιν φρενῶν,
ὅστις τ' ἀληθής ἐστιν ὅς τε μὴ φίλος·
δισσάς τε φωνὰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἔχειν,
τὴν μὲν δικαίαν, τὴν δ' ὅπως ἐτύγχανεν,

Enter HIPPOLYTUS.

HIPPOLYTUS

Father, I heard thy crying, and I came
In haste: yet for what cause thou makest moan
I know not, but of thee I fain would hear.
Ha! what is this? Father, thy wife I see
Dead!—matter this for marvel passing great.
But now I left her, who upon this light
Looked, it is not yet a long season since.
What hath befallen her? How perished she?
Father, I fain would learn it from thy mouth.
Silent! In trouble silence naught avails.
The heart that yearns to know all cares of thine
Fain shall be found to prove thy troubles too.
Sure, from thy friends—yea, and thy more than friends,
Father, it is not right to hide thy griefs.

THESEUS

O men that ofttimes err, and err in vain,
Why are ye teaching ever arts untold,
And search out manifold inventions still,
But one thing know not, no, have never sought it,
To teach them wit, in whom no wisdom dwells?

HIPPOLYTUS

A cunning sage were this, endued with power
To force them to be wise who are witless all!
But—so ill-timed thy speculations are—
Father, I fear thy tongue for grief runs wild.

THESEUS

Out! There should dwell in men some certain test
Of friendship, a discerner of the heart,
To show who is true friend and who is false.
Yea, all men should have had two several voices,
One honest, one—as chance or interest swayed;

ὡς ἡ φρονοῦσα τἄδικ' ἐξηλέγχετο
πρὸς τῆς δικαίας, κοὐκ ἂν ἠπατώμεθα.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ τις εἰς σὸν οὖς με διαβαλὼν ἔχει
φίλων, νοσοῦμεν δ' οὐδὲν ὄντες αἴτιοι;
ἔκ τοι πέπληγμαι· σοὶ γὰρ ἐκπλήσσουσί με
λόγοι παραλλάσσοντες ἔξεδροι φρενῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

φεῦ τῆς βροτείας—ποῖ προβήσεται;—φρενός·
τί τέρμα τόλμης καὶ θράσους γενήσεται;
εἰ γὰρ κατ' ἀνδρὸς βίοτον ἐξογκώσεται,
ὁ δ' ὕστερος τοῦ πρόσθεν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν
πανοῦργος ἔσται, θεοῖσι προσβαλεῖν χθονὶ
ἄλλην δεήσει γαῖαν, ἣ χωρήσεται
τοὺς μὴ δικαίους καὶ κακοὺς πεφυκότας.
σκέψασθε δ' εἰς τόνδ', ὅστις ἐξ ἐμοῦ γεγὼς
ᾔσχυνε τἀμὰ λέκτρα κἀξελέγχεται
πρὸς τῆς θανούσης ἐμφανῶς κάκιστος ὤν.
δεῖξον δ', ἐπειδή γ' εἰς μίασμ' ἐλήλυθας,
τὸ σὸν πρόσωπον δεῦρ' ἐναντίον πατρί.
σὺ δὴ θεοῖσιν ὡς περισσὸς ὢν ἀνὴρ
ξύνει; σὺ σώφρων καὶ κακῶν ἀκήρατος;
οὐκ ἂν πιθοίμην τοῖσι σοῖς κόμποις ἐγὼ
θεοῖσι προσθεὶς ἀμαθίαν φρονεῖν κακῶς.
ἤδη νυν αὔχει καὶ δι' ἀψύχου βορᾶς
σίτοις καπήλευ', Ὀρφέα τ' ἄνακτ' ἔχων
βάκχευε πολλῶν γραμμάτων τιμῶν καπνούς·
ἐπεί γ' ἐλήφθης. τοὺς δὲ τοιούτους ἐγὼ
φεύγειν προφωνῶ πᾶσι· θηρεύουσι γὰρ
σεμνοῖς λόγοισιν, αἰσχρὰ μηχανώμενοι.

That so the traitor voice might be convict
Before the honest, nor we be deceived.

HIPPOLYTUS

How?—to thine ear hath some friend slandered me,
That I the innocent am in evil case?
Astonied am I, for thy words amaze me,
Thus wandering wide astray from reason's throne.

THESEUS

Out on man's heart!—to what depths will it sink?
Where shall assurance end and hardihood?
For if it swell with every generation,
And the new age reach heights of villainy
Above the old, the Gods must needs create
A new earth unto this, that room be found
For the unrighteous and unjust in grain.
Look on this man, who, though he be my son,
Hath shamed my couch, and shall be manifest proved
Most vile, by testimony of the dead.

HIPPOLYTUS *covers his face in horror.*

Nay, show thy face—since thou hast come to this,
This foulness,—look thy father in the face!
Dost thou with Gods—O thou no common man!—
Consort? Art thou the chaste, the stainless one?
I will not trust thy boasts, for so should I
Impute to Gods unwisdom's ignorance.
Now vaunt, ay now!—set out thy paltry wares
Of lifeless food:[1] take Orpheus for thy king:
Rave, worship vapourings of many a scroll:
For ah, thou'rt caught! I warn all men to shun
Such hypocrites as this; for they hunt souls
With canting words, the while they plot foul sin.

[1] Abstinence from animal food was a feature of the ascetic doctrines attributed to Orpheus, as of those of Pythagoras.

τέθνηκεν ἥδε· τοῦτό σ' ἐκσώσειν δοκεῖς ;
ἐν τῷδ' ἁλίσκει πλεῖστον, ὦ κάκιστε σύ·
ποῖοι γὰρ ὅρκοι κρείσσονες, τίνες λόγοι
τῆσδ' ἂν γένοιντ' ἄν, ὥστε σ' αἰτίαν φυγεῖν ;
μισεῖν σε φήσεις τήνδε καὶ τὸ δὴ νόθον
τοῖς γνησίοισι πολέμιον πεφυκέναι·
κακὴν ἄρ' αὐτὴν ἔμπορον βίου λέγεις,
εἰ δυσμενείᾳ σῇ τὰ φίλτατ' ὤλεσεν.
ἀλλ' ὡς τὸ μῶρον ἀνδράσιν μὲν οὐκ ἔνι,
γυναιξὶ δ' ἐμπέφυκεν ; οἶδ' ἐγὼ νέους
οὐδὲν γυναικῶν ὄντας ἀσφαλεστέρους,
ὅταν ταράξῃ Κύπρις ἡβῶσαν φρένα·
τὸ δ' ἄρσεν αὐτοὺς ὠφελεῖ προσκείμενον.
νῦν οὖν τί ταῦτα σοῖς ἁμιλλῶμαι λόγοις
νεκροῦ παρόντος μάρτυρος σαφεστάτου ;
ἔξερρε γαίας τῆσδ' ὅσον τάχος φυγάς,
καὶ μήτ' Ἀθήνας τὰς θεοδμήτους μόλῃς,
μήτ' εἰς ὅρους γῆς ἧς ἐμὸν κρατεῖ δόρυ.
εἰ γὰρ παθών γε σοῦ τάδ' ἡσσηθήσομαι,
οὐ μαρτυρήσει μ' Ἴσθμιος Σίνις ποτὲ
κτανεῖν ἑαυτόν, ἀλλὰ κομπάζειν μάτην,
οὐδ' αἱ θαλάσσῃ σύννομοι Σκειρωνίδες
φήσουσι πέτραι †τοῖς κακοῖς μ' εἶναι βαρύν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως εἴποιμ' ἂν εὐτυχεῖν τινα
θνητῶν· τὰ γὰρ δὴ πρῶτ' ἀνέστραπται πάλιν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

πάτερ, μένος μὲν ξύστασίς τε σῶν φρενῶν
δεινή· τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἔχον καλοὺς λόγους,
εἴ τις διαπτύξειεν, οὐ καλὸν τόδε.
ἐγὼ δ' ἄκομψος εἰς ὄχλον δοῦναι λόγον,

Dead is she: thinkest thou this saveth thee?
Hereby thou art most convicted, basest thou!
What oaths, what protestations shall bear down

Thrusts tablet into HIPPOLYTUS' *hand.*

This, for thine absolution of the charge? . . . .
Now, what is thy defence?—"She hated me:
Bastard and true-born still are natural foes?"
Fools' traffic this in life—to fling away
For hate of *thee* the dearest thing she owed!
Or—say'st thou?—"Frailty is not in men,
But in the blood of women." Youths, I have proved,
Are no whit more than women continent,
When Cypris stirs a heart in flush of youth:
Yet all the strength of manhood helpeth them.
But wherefore thus contend against thy pleas,
When there the corpse lies, witness faithful and true?
Hence from this land, an exile, with all speed.
Never come thou to god-built Athens more,
Nor any marches where my spear hath sway:
For if 'neath thy mishandling I sit still,
Never shall Isthmian Sinis testify
That I slew him, but name it idle vaunt;
Nor those Scironian Rocks that skirt the sea
Shall call me terrible to evil-doers.

CHORUS

I dare not name of mortals any man
Happy, for lo, the first is made the last.

HIPPOLYTUS

Father, thy rage and strong-strained fury of soul
Are fearful: yet, fair-seeming though the charge,
If one unfold it, all unfair it is.
I have no skill to speak before a throng:

εἰς ἥλικας δὲ κὠλίγους σοφώτερος.
ἔχει δὲ μοῖραν καὶ τόδ'· οἱ γὰρ ἐν σοφοῖς
φαῦλοι παρ' ὄχλῳ μουσικώτεροι λέγειν.
ὅμως δ' ἀνάγκη, συμφορᾶς ἀφιγμένης,
γλῶσσάν μ' ἀφεῖναι. πρῶτα δ' ἄρξομαι λέγειν
ὅθεν μ' ὑπῆλθες πρῶτον ὡς διαφθερῶν
οὐκ ἀντιλέξοντ'. εἰσορᾷς φάος τόδε
καὶ γαῖαν· ἐν τοῖσδ' οὐκ ἔνεστ' ἀνὴρ ἐμοῦ,
οὐδ' ἢν σὺ μὴ φῇς, σωφρονέστερος γεγώς.
ἐπίσταμαι γὰρ πρῶτα μὲν θεοὺς σέβειν,
φίλοις τε χρῆσθαι μὴ ἀδικεῖν πειρωμένοις,
ἀλλ' οἷσιν αἰδὼς μήτ' ἐπαγγέλλειν κακὰ
μήτ' ἀνθυπουργεῖν αἰσχρὰ τοῖσι χρωμένοις·
οὐκ ἐγγελαστὴς τῶν ὁμιλούντων, πάτερ,
ἀλλ' αὑτὸς οὐ παροῦσι κἀγγὺς ὢν φίλος.
ἑνὸς δ' ἄθικτος, ᾧ με νῦν ἑλεῖν δοκεῖς·
λέχους γὰρ εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας ἁγνὸν δέμας.
οὐκ οἶδα πρᾶξιν τήνδε πλὴν λόγῳ κλύων
γραφῇ τε λεύσσων· οὐδὲ ταῦτα γὰρ σκοπεῖν
πρόθυμός εἰμι, παρθένον ψυχὴν ἔχων.
καὶ δὴ τὸ σῶφρον τοὐμὸν οὐ πείθει σ' ἴσως·
δεῖ δή σε δεῖξαι τῷ τρόπῳ διεφθάρην.
πότερα τὸ τῆσδε σῶμ' ἐκαλλιστεύετο
πασῶν γυναικῶν ; ἢ σὸν οἰκήσειν δόμον
ἔγκληρον εὐνὴν προσλαβὼν ἐπήλπισα ;
μάταιος ἆρ' ἦ, κοὐδαμοῦ μὲν οὖν φρενῶν.
ἀλλ' ὡς τυραννεῖν ἡδὺ τοῖσι σώφροσιν ;
ἥκιστά γ', εἰ μὴ τὰς φρένας διέφθορε
θνητῶν ὅσοισιν ἁνδάνει μοναρχία.
ἐγὼ δ' ἀγῶνας μὲν κρατεῖν Ἑλληνικοὺς
πρῶτος θέλοιμ' ἄν, ἐν πόλει δὲ δεύτερος
σὺν τοῖς ἀρίστοις εὐτυχεῖν ἀεὶ φίλοις.

My tongue is loosed with equals, and those few.
And reason: they that are among the wise
Of none account, to mobs are eloquent.
Yet needs I must, now this mischance hath lighted,
Unrein my tongue. And first will I begin
Where thou didst first assail, as thou wouldst crush me,
And I find no reply. See'st thou yon sun
And earth?—within their compass is no man—
Though thou deny it—chaster-souled than I.
For I have learnt, first, to revere the Gods,
Then, to have friends which seek to do no wrong,
Friends who think shame to proffer aught of base,
Yea, or to render others shameful service.
No mocker am I, father, at my friends,
But to the absent even as to the present:
In one thing flawless,—where thou think'st me trapped,—
For to this day my body is clean of lust.

I know this commerce not, save by the ear
And sight of pictures,—little will have I
To look thereon, who keep a virgin soul.
Yet, grant my virtue wins not thy belief,
Sure 'tis for thee to show whereby I fell.
Wilt say this woman's form in grace outshone
All women?—that I hoped thy state to inherit
By winning for mine own thine heiress-queen?
Vain fool were I—nay rather, wholly mad!
"But Power can tempt," might one say, "even the chaste."
Nay verily!—save the lust of sovereignty
Poison the wit of all who covet it.
Fain would I foremost victor be in games
Hellenic, and be second in the realm,
And with pure-hearted friends be happy still.

πράσσειν γὰρ εὖ πάρεστι, κίνδυνός τ' ἀπὼν
κρείσσω δίδωσι τῆς τυραννίδος χάριν.
ἓν οὐ λέλεκται τῶν ἐμῶν, τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔχεις·
εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν μοι μάρτυς οἷός εἰμ' ἐγώ,
καὶ τῆσδ' ὁρώσης φέγγος ἠγωνιζόμην,
ἔργοις ἂν εἶδες τοὺς κακοὺς διεξιών.
νῦν δ' ὅρκιόν σοι Ζῆνα καὶ πέδον χθονὸς
ὄμνυμι τῶν σῶν μήποθ' ἅψασθαι γάμων
μηδ' ἂν θελῆσαι μηδ' ἂν ἔννοιαν λαβεῖν.
ἦ τἄρ' ὀλοίμην ἀκλεὴς ἀνώνυμος,
ἄπολις ἄοικος, φυγὰς ἀλητεύων χθόνα,
καὶ μήτε πόντος μήτε γῆ δέξαιτό μου
σάρκας θανόντος, εἰ κακὸς πέφυκ' ἀνήρ.
εἰ δ' ἥδε δειμαίνουσ' ἀπώλεσεν βίον
οὐκ οἶδ'· ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐ θέμις πέρα λέγειν.
ἐσωφρόνησε δ' οὐκ ἔχουσα σωφρονεῖν,
ἡμεῖς δ', ἔχοντες οὐ καλῶς, ἐχρώμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀρκοῦσαν εἶπας αἰτίας ἀποστροφήν,
ὅρκους παρασχών, πίστιν οὐ σμικράν, θεῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἆρ' οὐκ ἐπῳδὸς καὶ γόης πέφυχ' ὅδε,
ὃς τὴν ἐμὴν πέποιθεν εὐοργησίᾳ
ψυχὴν κρατήσειν τὸν τεκόντ' ἀτιμάσας;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

καὶ σοῦ γε κάρτα ταῦτα θαυμάζω, πάτερ·
εἰ γὰρ σὺ μὲν παῖς ἦσθ', ἐγὼ δὲ σὸς πατήρ,
ἔκτεινά τοί σ' ἂν κοὐ φυγαῖς ἐζημίουν,
εἴπερ γυναικὸς ἠξίους ἐμῆς θιγεῖν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὡς ἄξιον τόδ' εἶπας· οὐχ οὕτω θανεῖ,
ὥσπερ σὺ σαυτῷ τόνδε προὔθηκας νόμον·

For there is true well-being, from peril far,
Which giveth sweeter joys than sovereignty.
So hast thou all my counterpleas, save one :—
Could I that witness call who knows mine heart,
And, pleading, face thy dead wife's living face,
By deeds shouldst thou search out and know the
wicked :
But now—by Zeus Oath-warden, by Earth's plain,
Swear I, I ne'er attempted couch of thine,
No, nor had wished it, nor had dreamed thereof.
God grant I perish nameless, fameless all,
Cityless, homeless, exile, vagabond
On earth,—may sea nor land receive my corpse
When I am dead, if I be this vile thing!
Now if through fear she flung away her life
I know not. More I cannot sinless say.
Her honour by dishonour did she guard :
I, in a sore strait, cleave to honour still.

CHORUS

Thou hast said enough to turn this charge from thee,
Tendering the oath of Gods, the awful pledge.

THESEUS

Juggler with words and trickster is he not,
Who thinks by his unruffled calm to outface
My mood, when his own father he hath shamed ?

HIPPOLYTUS

Nay, but I marvel, father, at this in thee ;—
For, if my son thou wert, and I thy sire,
I had slain thee : exile should not be thy mulct,
If on my wife thou hadst dared to lay a hand.

THESEUS

Good sooth, well said : yet not so shalt thou die—
Not by the doom thou speakest for thyself!

ταχὺς γὰρ Ἅιδης ῥᾷστος ἀνδρὶ δυστυχεῖ·
ἀλλ' ἐκ πατρῴας φυγὰς ἀλητεύων χθονὸς
ξένην ἐπ' αἶαν λυπρὸν ἀντλήσεις βίον·
μισθὸς γὰρ οὗτός ἐστιν ἀνδρὶ δυσσεβεῖ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οἴμοι, τί δράσεις; οὐδὲ μηνυτὴν χρόνον
δέξει καθ' ἡμῶν, ἀλλά μ' ἐξελᾷς χθονός;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πέραν γε πόντου τερμόνων τ' Ἀτλαντικῶν,
εἴ πως δυναίμην, ὡς σὸν ἐχθαίρω κάρα.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐδ' ὅρκον οὐδὲ πίστιν οὐδὲ μάντεων
φήμας ἐλέγξας ἄκριτον ἐκβαλεῖς με γῆς;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἡ δέλτος ἥδε κλῆρον οὐ δεδεγμένη
κατηγορεῖ σου πιστά· τοὺς δ' ὑπὲρ κάρα
φοιτῶντας ὄρνεις πόλλ' ἐγὼ χαίρειν λέγω.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ θεοί, τί δῆτα τοὐμὸν οὐ λύω στόμα,
ὅστις γ' ὑφ' ὑμῶν, οὓς σέβω, διόλλυμαι;
οὐ δῆτα· πάντως οὐ πίθοιμ' ἂν οὕς με δεῖ,
μάτην δ' ἂν ὅρκους συγχέαιμ' οὓς ὤμοσα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἴμοι· τὸ σεμνὸν ὥς μ' ἀποκτείνει τὸ σόν.
οὐκ εἶ πατρῴας ἐκτὸς ὡς τάχιστα γῆς;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ποῖ δῆθ' ὁ τλήμων τρέψομαι; τίνος ξένων
δόμους ἔσειμι τῇδ' ἐπ' αἰτίᾳ φυγών;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὅστις γυναικῶν λυμεῶνας ἥδεται
ξένους κομίζων καὶ συνοικούρους κακῶν.

Ay, easiest for the wretched is swift death.
But from the home-land exiled, wandering
To strange soil, shalt thou drain life's bitter dregs ;
For this is meet wage for the impious man.

HIPPOLYTUS

Woe's me !—what wilt thou do ? Wilt not receive
Time's witness in my cause, but banish now ?

THESEUS

Beyond the sea, beyond the Atlantic bourn,
If this I could ; so much I hate thy face.

HIPPOLYTUS

Nor oath, nor pledge, nor prophet's utterance
Wilt test, but cast me forth the land untried ?

THESEUS

This tablet, though it bear no prophet's sign,
Accuseth thee, nor lieth : but the birds
That roam o'erhead—I wave them long farewell.

HIPPOLYTUS (*aside*)

O Gods, why can I not unlock my lips,
Who am destroyed by you whom I revere ?
No !—whom I need persuade, I should not so,
And all for naught should break the oaths I swore.

THESEUS

Faugh !—how it chokes me, this thy saintly mien !
Out from thy fatherland ! Straightway begone !

HIPPOLYTUS

Unhappy ! whither shall I flee ?—what home
Of what friend enter, banished on such charge ?

THESEUS

Of whoso joys in welcoming for guests
Defilers of men's wives, which dwell with sin.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

αἰαῖ· πρὸς ἧπαρ δακρύων τ' ἐγγὺς τόδε,
εἰ δὴ κακός γε φαίνομαι δοκῶ τέ σοι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τότε στενάζειν καὶ προγιγνώσκειν σ' ἐχρῆν,
ὅτ' εἰς πατρῴαν ἄλοχον ὑβρίζειν ἔτλης.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ δώματ', εἴθε φθέγμα γηρύσαισθέ μοι
καὶ μαρτυρήσαιτ' εἰ κακὸς πέφυκ' ἀνήρ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εἰς τοὺς ἀφώνους μάρτυρας φεύγεις σοφῶς·
τὸ δ' ἔργον οὐ λέγον σε μηνύει κακόν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

φεῦ·
εἴθ' ἦν ἐμαυτὸν προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον
στάνθ', ὡς ἐδάκρυσ' οἷα πάσχομεν κακά.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πολλῷ γε μᾶλλον σαυτὸν ἤσκησας σέβειν
ἢ τοὺς τεκόντας ὅσια δρᾶν, δίκαιος ὤν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ δυστάλαινα μῆτερ, ὦ πικραὶ γοναί·
μηδείς ποτ' εἴη τῶν ἐμῶν φίλων νόθος.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐχ ἕλξετ' αὐτόν, δμῶες; οὐκ ἀκούετε
πάλαι ξενοῦσθαι τόνδε προὐννέποντά με;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

κλαίων τις αὐτῶν ἆρ' ἐμοῦ γε θίξεται·
σὺ δ' αὐτός, εἴ σοι θυμός, ἐξώθει χθονός.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δράσω τάδ', εἰ μὴ τοῖς ἐμοῖς πείσει λόγοις·
οὐ γάρ τις οἶκτος σῆς μ' ὑπέρχεται φυγῆς.

HIPPOLYTUS

Alas! this stabs mine heart well-nigh to weeping,
If I be published villain, thou believe it!

THESEUS

Then shouldest thou have moaned and taken thought,
When thou dar'dst outrage thine own father's wife!

HIPPOLYTUS

O halls, could ye but find a voice for me,
And witness if I be a wicked man!

THESEUS

Wisely thou fleest to speechless witnesses!
This deed, though it speak not, declares thee vile.

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah, to stand face to face and see myself,
That for the wrongs I suffer I might weep!

THESEUS

Yea, 'tis thy wont to gaze on thy perfections
More than to render parents righteous honour.

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah, hapless mother!—ah, my bitter birth!
Base-born be never any that I love!

THESEUS

Will ye not hale him hence, thralls?—heard ye not
Long since his banishment pronounced of me?

HIPPOLYTUS

Who layeth hand on me of them shall rue!
Thou thrust me from the land, if such thy mood.

THESEUS

That will I, an thou wilt not heed mine hest.
No pity for thine exile visits me. [*Exit* THESEUS.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἄραρεν, ὡς ἔοικεν· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ·
ὡς οἶδα μὲν ταῦτ᾽, οἶδα δ᾽ οὐχ ὅπως φράσω.
ὦ φιλτάτη μοι δαιμόνων Λητοῦς κόρη
σύνθακε συγκύναγε, φευξόμεσθα δὴ
κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας. ἀλλὰ χαίρετ᾽, ὦ πόλις
καὶ γαῖ᾽ Ἐρεχθέως· ὦ πέδον Τροιζήνιον,
ὡς ἐγκαθηβᾶν πόλλ᾽ ἔχεις εὐδαίμονα,
χαῖρ᾽· ὕστατον γάρ σ᾽ εἰσορῶν προσφθέγγομαι.
ἴτ᾽, ὦ νέοι μοι τῆσδε γῆς ὁμήλικες,
προσείπαθ᾽ ἡμᾶς καὶ προπέμψατε χθονός·
ὡς οὔποτ᾽ ἄλλον ἄνδρα σωφρονέστερον
ὄψεσθε, κεἰ μὴ ταῦτ᾽ ἐμῷ δοκεῖ πατρί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α´

ἦ μέγα μοι τὰ θεῶν μελεδήμαθ᾽, ὅταν φρένας ἔλθῃ,
λύπας παραιρεῖ·
ξύνεσιν δέ τιν᾽ ἐλπίδι κεύθων
λείπομαι ἔν τε τύχαις θνατῶν καὶ ἐν ἔργμασι λεύσσων·
ἄλλα γὰρ ἄλλοθεν ἀμείβεται,
μετὰ δ᾽ ἵσταται ἀνδράσιν αἰὼν
πολυπλάνητος αἰεί.

ἀντ. α´

εἴθε μοι εὐξαμένᾳ θεόθεν τάδε μοῖρα παράσχοι,
τύχαν μετ᾽ ὄλβου
καὶ ἀκήρατον ἄλγεσι θυμόν·
δόξα δὲ μήτ᾽ ἀτρεκὴς μήτ᾽ αὖ παράσημος ἐνείη·
ῥᾴδια δ᾽ ἤθεα τὸν αὔριον
μεταβαλλομένα χρόνον αἰεὶ
βίον συνευτυχοίην.

HIPPOLYTUS

So then my fate is sealed. Ah, woe is me!
I know the truth, yet know not how to tell it.
Dearest of Gods to me, O Leto's Child,
Companion, fellow-huntress, I shall flee
Athens the glorious. Farewell, City and Land
Of old Erechtheus! O Troezenian plain,
How many pleasant paths of youth hast thou!
Farewell: I see thee, hail thee, the last time.
Come, O ye youths, mine age-mates in this land,
Speak parting word: escort me from this soil:
For never shall ye see a chaster man,
Albeit this my sire believeth not. [*Exit.*

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

When faith overfloweth my mind, God's providence
all-embracing [but to *know!*"
Banisheth griefs: but when doubt whispereth "Ah
No clue through the tangle I find of fate and of life
for my tracing:
There is ever a change and many a change,
And the mutable fortune of men evermore sways
to and fro
Over limitless range.

(*Ant.* 1)

Ah, would the Gods hear prayer!—would they grant
to me these supplications— [of pain,
A lot with prosperity sweet, and a soul unshadowed
And a faith neither fixed foursquare on the flint,
nor on sandy foundations!
Quick-shifting my sail to the coming breeze
Of the morrow, so may I fleet, ever voyaging life's
wide main
Over stormless seas.

στρ. β'

οὐκέτι γὰρ καθαρὰν φρέν' ἔχω τὰ παρ' ἐλπίδα
λεύσσων,
ἐπεὶ τὸν Ἑλλανίας
φανερώτατον ἀστέρ' Ἀθάνας
εἴδομεν εἴδομεν ἐκ πατρὸς ὀργᾶς
ἄλλαν ἐπ' αἶαν ἱέμενον.
ὦ ψάμαθοι πολιήτιδος ἀκτᾶς
δρυμός τ' ὄρειος, ὅθι κυνῶν
ὠκυπόδων μέτα θῆρας ἔναιρεν
Δίκτυνναν ἀμφὶ σεμνάν.

ἀντ. β'

οὐκέτι συζυγίαν πώλων Ἐνετᾶν ἐπιβάσει
τὸν ἀμφὶ Λίμνας τρόχον
κατέχων ποδὶ γυμνάδος ἵππου.
μοῦσα δ' ἄυπνος ὑπ' ἄντυγι χορδᾶν
λήξει πατρῷον ἀνὰ δόμον·
ἀστέφανοι δὲ κόρας ἀνάπαυλαι
Λατοῦς βαθεῖαν ἀνὰ χλόαν·
νυμφιδίων δ' ἀπόλωλε φυγᾷ σᾷ
λέκτρων ἅμιλλα κούραις.

ἐγὼ δὲ σᾷ δυστυχίᾳ δάκρυσι διοίσω ἐπῳδ.
πότμον ἄποτμον· ὦ τάλαινα
μᾶτερ, ἔτεκες ἀνόνατα· φεῦ,
μανίω θεοῖσιν·
ἰὼ ἰὼ συζύγιαι Χάριτες,

(*Str.* 2)

My mind is a fountain troubled; I see things all undreamed:
For the Star of Athens, that beamed
The brightest withal in Hellas-land,
We have seen him driven to an alien strand,
By the wrath of a father have seen him banned.
Ah, cityward sands, ye shall wait him in vain,
And ye mountain woods, where streamed
'Twixt the oaks the pack on the wild boar's track
In dread Dictynna's hunter-train,
Till the quarry was slain.

(*Ant.* 2)

Nevermore shall he harness the Henetan horses and leap on his car,
O'er the race-course of Limne afar
To speed the courser's feet of fire:
And the songs, that once 'neath the strings of the lyre
Slept never, shall cease in the halls of his sire.
Ungarlanded Artemis' bowers shall be
In the greenwood depths that are.
By thine exile have perished the sweet hopes cherished
Of our maids, and their gentle rivalry
In love for thee.

(*Epode*)

For thy woeful fate shall I pass amid tears fast-flowing
A fortuneless fortune. O mother evil-starred,
This day thy birth-joy effaces!
I am wroth with the Gods:—O Graces
Aye linkèd in loving embraces,

τί τὸν τάλαν' ἐκ πατρίας γᾶς
τὸν οὐδὲν ἄτας αἴτιον
πέμπετε τῶνδ' ἀπ' οἴκων;

καὶ μὴν ὀπαδὸν Ἱππολύτου τόνδ' εἰσορῶ
σπουδῇ σκυθρωπὸν πρὸς δόμους ὁρμώμενον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ποῖ γῆς ἄνακτα τῆσδε Θησέα μολὼν
εὕροιμ' ἄν, ὦ γυναῖκες; εἴπερ ἴστ', ἐμοὶ
σημήνατ'· ἆρα τῶνδε δωμάτων ἔσω;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅδ' αὐτὸς ἔξω δωμάτων πορεύεται.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θησεῦ, μερίμνης ἄξιον φέρω λόγον
σοὶ καὶ πολίταις οἵ τ' Ἀθηναίων πόλιν
ναίουσι καὶ γῆς τέρμονας Τροιζηνίας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί δ' ἔστι; μῶν τις συμφορὰ νεωτέρα
δισσὰς κατείληφ' ἀστυγείτονας πόλεις;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Ἱππόλυτος οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὡς εἰπεῖν ἔπος·
δέδορκε μέντοι φῶς ἐπὶ σμικρᾶς ῥοπῆς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πρὸς τοῦ; δι' ἔχθρας μῶν τις ἦν ἀφιγμένος,
ὅτου κατῄσχυν' ἄλοχον ὡς πατρὸς βίᾳ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οἰκεῖος αὐτὸν ὤλεσ' ἁρμάτων ὄχος
ἀραί τε τοῦ σοῦ στόματος, ἃς σὺ σῷ πατρὶ
πόντου κρέοντι παιδὸς ἠράσω πέρι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ θεοὶ Πόσειδόν θ', ὡς ἄρ' ἦσθ' ἐμὸς πατὴρ
ὀρθῶς, ἀκούσας τῶν ἐμῶν κατευγμάτων.

Why do ye suffer that he from his land should be going,
From his home, who hath nowise earned a doom so bitter-hard?
But lo, I see Hippolytus' henchman nigh
Hasting unto the halls with clouded brows.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Where should I go and find this country's king,
Theseus, ye women? If ye know, declare
Straightway to me. Within these halls is he?

CHORUS

Lo yonder where he cometh forth the halls.

Enter THESEUS.

MESSENGER

Theseus, I bring a sorrow-kindling tale
To thee and all the citizens which dwell
In Athens and the bounds of Troezen-land.

THESEUS

What now? Hath some disaster unforeseen
Fallen on these two neighbour-citied states?

MESSENGER

Hippolytus is no more!—so may one say,
Though yet a little space he seeth light.

THESEUS

Of whom slain? Hath one met him in his wrath,
Whose wife he had outraged, even as his sire's?

MESSENGER

His proper chariot-team hath dealt him death,
And thy mouth's curses, which thou didst call down
From the Sea's Lord, thy father, on thy son.

THESEUS

O Gods! Poseidon! how thou wast indeed
My father, who hast heard my malison!

πῶς καὶ διώλετ᾽; εἰπέ· τῷ τρόπῳ Δίκης
ἔπαισεν αὐτὸν ῥόπτρον αἰσχύναντ᾽ ἐμέ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἡμεῖς μὲν ἀκτῆς κυμοδέγμονος πέλας
ψήκτραισιν ἵππων ἐκτενίζομεν τρίχας
κλαίοντες· ἦλθε γάρ τις ἄγγελος λέγων
ὡς οὐκέτ᾽ ἐν γῇ τῇδ᾽ ἀναστρέψοι πόδα
Ἱππόλυτος, ἐκ σοῦ τλήμονας φυγὰς ἔχων.
ὁ δ᾽ ἦλθε ταὐτὸν δακρύων ἔχων μέλος
ἡμῖν ἐπ᾽ ἀκταῖς· μυρία δ᾽ ὀπισθόπους
φίλων ἅμ᾽ ἔστειχ᾽ ἡλίκων ὁμήγυρις.
χρόνῳ δὲ δήποτ᾽ εἶπ᾽ ἀπαλλαχθεὶς γόων·
τί ταῦτ᾽ ἀλύω; πειστέον πατρὸς λόγοις.
ἐντύναθ᾽ ἵππους ἅρμασι ζυγηφόρους,
δμῶες· πόλις γὰρ οὐκέτ᾽ ἔστιν ἥδε μοι.
τοὐνθένδε μέντοι πᾶς ἀνὴρ ἠπείγετο,
καὶ θᾶσσον ἢ λέγοι τις ἐξηρτυμένας
πώλους παρ᾽ αὐτὸν δεσπότην ἐστήσαμεν.
μάρπτει δὲ χερσὶν ἡνίας ἀπ᾽ ἄντυγος,
αὐταῖσιν ἀρβύλαισιν ἁρμόσας πόδας.
καὶ πρῶτα μὲν θεοῖς εἶπ᾽ ἀναπτύξας χέρας·
Ζεῦ, μηκέτ᾽ εἴην, εἰ κακὸς πέφυκ᾽ ἀνήρ·
αἴσθοιτο δ᾽ ἡμᾶς ὡς ἀτιμάζει πατὴρ
ἤτοι θανόντας ἢ φάος δεδορκότας.
κἀν τῷδ᾽ ἐπῆγε κέντρον εἰς χεῖρας λαβὼν
πώλοις ὁμαρτῇ· πρόσπολοι δ᾽ ἐφ᾽ ἅρματος
πέλας χαλινῶν εἱπόμεσθα δεσπότῃ
τὴν εὐθὺς Ἄργους κἀπιδαυρίας ὁδόν.
ἐπεὶ δ᾽ ἔρημον χῶρον εἰσεβάλλομεν,
ἀκτή τις ἔστι τοὐπέκεινα τῆσδε γῆς
πρὸς πόντον ἤδη κειμένη Σαρωνικόν.
ἔνθεν τις ἠχὼ χθόνιος ὡς βροντὴ Διὸς

How perished he? In what way did the gin
Of justice snap on him who wrought me shame?

MESSENGER

We, hard beside the beach that greets the surf,
With combs were smoothing out his horses' manes
Weeping: for word had come to us to say
That no more in this land Hippolytus
Might walk, of thee to wretched exile doomed.
Then came he, bringing the same tale of tears
To us upon the strand: a countless throng
Of friends his age-mates following with him came.
But, ceasing at the last from moan, he cried:
"Why rave I thus? I must obey my sire.
Harness the horses to the chariot-yoke,
My thralls: this city is no more for me."

Then, then did every man bestir himself.
Swifter than one could say it were the steeds
Harnessed, and by our lord's side set we them.
Then the reins caught he from the chariot-rail,
And in the car's foot-rests set firm his feet,
But to the Gods first stretched his hands and cried:
"Zeus, may I die if I a villain am!
May my sire know that he is wronging me,
When I am dead, if not while I see light!"
Then in his hand he took the scourge and smote
At once the steeds. We henchmen by the car
Fast by the reins attended on our lord
Towards Argos straight and Epidauria.

And, as we entered on a desert tract,
Beyond this Troezen's border lies a beach
Sloping full down to yon Saronic Sea.
There from earth's womb a noise like Zeus's thunder

*βαρὺν βρόμον μεθῆκε φρικώδη κλύειν·
ὀρθὸν δὲ κρᾶτ' ἔστησαν οὖς τ' ἐς οὐρανὸν
ἵπποι· παρ' ἡμῖν δ' ἦν φόβος νεανικὸς
πόθεν ποτ' εἴη φθόγγος. εἰς δ' ἁλιρρόθους
ἀκτὰς ἀποβλέψαντες ἱερὸν εἴδομεν
κῦμ' οὐρανῷ στηρίζον, ὥστ' ἀφῃρέθη
Σκείρωνος ἀκτὰς ὄμμα τοὐμὸν εἰσορᾶν·
ἔκρυπτε δ' Ἰσθμὸν καὶ πέτραν Ἀσκληπιοῦ.
κἄπειτ' ἀνοιδῆσάν τε καὶ πέριξ ἀφρὸν
πολὺν καχλάζον ποντίῳ φυσήματι
χωρεῖ πρὸς ἀκτάς, οὗ τέθριππος ἦν ὄχος.
αὐτῷ δὲ σὺν κλύδωνι καὶ τρικυμίᾳ
κῦμ' ἐξέθηκε ταῦρον, ἄγριον τέρας,
οὗ πᾶσα μὲν χθὼν φθέγματος πληρουμένη
φρικῶδες ἀντεφθέγγετ', εἰσορῶσι δὲ
κρεῖσσον θέαμα δεργμάτων ἐφαίνετο.
εὐθὺς δὲ πώλοις δεινὸς ἐμπίπτει φόβος·
καὶ δεσπότης μὲν ἱππικοῖσιν ἤθεσι
πολὺς ξυνοικῶν ἥρπασ' ἡνίας χεροῖν,
ἕλκει δέ, κώπην ὥστε ναυβάτης ἀνήρ,
ἱμᾶσιν εἰς τοὔπισθεν ἀρτήσας δέμας·
αἱ δ' ἐνδακοῦσαι στόμια πυριγενῆ γναθμοῖς
βίᾳ φέρουσιν, οὔτι ναυκλήρου χερὸς
οὔθ' ἱπποδέσμων οὔτε κολλητῶν ὄχων
μεταστρέφουσαι. κεἰ μὲν εἰς τὰ μαλθακὰ
γαίας ἔχων οἴακας εὐθύνοι δρόμον,
προὐφαίνετ' εἰς τοὔμπροσθεν, ὥστ' ἀναστρέφειν,
ταῦρος, φόβῳ τέτρωρον ἐκμαίνων ὄχον·
εἰ δ' εἰς πέτρας φέροιντο μαργῶσαι φρένας,
σιγῇ πελάζων ἄντυγι ξυνείπετο
εἰς τοῦθ' ἕως ἔσφηλε κἀνεχαίτισεν,
ἁψῖδα πέτρῳ προσβαλὼν ὀχήματος.*

Made muffled roaring, a blood-curdling sound.
Then the steeds lifted head and pricked the ear;
And thrilled through us most vehement dismay
Whence might the sound be. To the sea-lashed shores
Then glanced we, and a surge unearthly saw
Up-columned to the sky, that from my sight
Shrouded was all the beach Scironian;
Veiled was the Isthmus and Asclepius' Crag.
Then swelling higher, higher, and spurting forth
All round a cloud of foam and sea-blown spray,
Shoreward it rusheth, toward the four-horse car.
Then from the breaker's midst and hugest surge
The wave belched forth a bull, a monster fierce,
With whose throat-thunder all the land was filled,
And echoed awfully, as on our gaze
He burst, a sight more dread than eyes could bear.
Straightway wild panic falleth on the steeds:
Yet their lord, wholly conversant with wont
Of horses, caught the reins in both his hands,
And tugs, as shipman tugs against the oar,
Throwing his body's weight against the reins.
But on the fire-forged bits they clenched their teeth,
And whirled him on o'ermastered, recking not
Of steering hand, or curb, or strong car's weight.
And if, yet holding to the chariot-helm,
Toward the smooth ground he strove to guide their course,
Aye showed that bull in front, to turn them back,
Maddening with fright the fourfold chariot-team.
If toward the rocks they rushed with frenzied heart,
Fast by the rail in silence followed he
On, till he fouled and overset the car,
Dashing against a rock the chariot-felly.

σύμφυρτα δ' ἦν ἅπαντα· σύριγγές τ' ἄνω
τροχῶν ἐπήδων ἀξόνων τ' ἐνήλατα.
αὐτὸς δ' ὁ τλήμων ἡνίαισιν ἐμπλακεὶς
δεσμὸν δυσεξήνυστον ἕλκεται δεθείς,
σποδούμενος μὲν πρὸς πέτραις φίλον κάρα,
θραύων δὲ σάρκας, δεινὰ δ' ἐξαυδῶν κλύειν·
στῆτ', ὦ φάτναισι ταῖς ἐμαῖς τεθραμμέναι,
μή μ' ἐξαλείψητ'· ὦ πατρὸς τάλαιν' ἀρά.
τίς ἄνδρ' ἄριστον βούλεται σῶσαι παρών;
πολλοὶ δὲ βουληθέντες ὑστέρῳ ποδὶ
ἐλειπόμεσθα. χὢ μὲν ἐκ δεσμῶν λυθεὶς
τμητῶν ἱμάντων οὐ κάτοιδ' ὅτῳ τρόπῳ
πίπτει, βραχὺν δὴ βίοτον ἐμπνέων ἔτι·
ἵπποι δ' ἔκρυφθεν καὶ τὸ δύστηνον τέρας
ταύρου λεπαίας οὐ κάτοιδ' ὅπου χθονός.
δοῦλος μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε σῶν δόμων, ἄναξ,
ἀτὰρ τοσοῦτόν γ' οὐ δυνήσομαί ποτε
τὸν σὸν πιθέσθαι παῖδ' ὅπως ἐστὶν κακός,
οὐδ' εἰ γυναικῶν πᾶν κρεμασθείη γένος,
καὶ τὴν ἐν Ἴδῃ γραμμάτων πλήσειέ τις
πεύκην, ἐπεί νιν ἐσθλὸν ὄντ' ἐπίσταμαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ· κέκρανται συμφορὰ νέων κακῶν,
οὐδ' ἔστι μοίρας τοῦ χρεών τ' ἀπαλλαγή.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

μίσει μὲν ἀνδρὸς τοῦ πεπονθότος τάδε
λόγοισιν ἥσθην τοῖσδε· νῦν δ' αἰδούμενος
θεούς τ' ἐκεῖνόν θ', οὕνεκ' ἐστὶν ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
οὔθ' ἥδομαι τοῖσδ' οὔτ' ἐπάχθομαι κακοῖς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πῶς οὖν; κομίζειν, ἢ τί χρὴ τὸν ἄθλιον
δράσαντας ἡμᾶς σῇ χαρίζεσθαι φρενί;

Then all was turmoil: upward leapt in air
Naves of the wheels and linchpins of the axles.
And he, unhappy, tangled in the reins,
Bound in indissoluble bonds, is haled
Dashing his head against the cruel rocks,
Rending his flesh, outshrieking piteous cries—
"O stay, ye horses nurtured at my cribs,
Destroy me not!—ah, father's curse ill-starred!
Will no one save an utter-innocent man?"
Ah, many willed, but far behind were left
With feet outstripped. Loosed from the toils at last
Of clean-cut reins,—I know not in what wise,—
He falls, yet breathing for short space of life.
Vanished the steeds and that accursèd monster,
The bull, mid rock-strewn ground, I know not where.

Thrall am I verily of thine house, O king;
Howbeit so foul a charge—I never can
Believe it of thy son, that he is vile,
Not though all womankind should hang themselves,
Though one should fill with writing every pine
In Ida:—he is righteous, this I know.

CHORUS

Woe for accomplishment of new disaster!
No refuge is there from the doom of fate.

THESEUS

For hatred of the man who thus hath fared,
Glad for this tale was I: but now, for awe
Of heaven, and for that he is yet my son,
Glad for this judgment am I not, nor grieved.

MESSENGER

How then?—must we bear yonder broken man
Hither?—or in what wise perform thy pleasure?

φρόντιζ'· ἐμοῖς δὲ χρώμενος βουλεύμασιν
οὐκ ὠμὸς εἰς σὸν παῖδα δυστυχοῦντ' ἔσει.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κομίζετ' αὐτόν, ὡς ἰδὼν ἐν ὄμμασι
τὸν τἄμ' ἀπαρνηθέντα μὴ χρᾶναι λέχη
λόγοις τ' ἐλέγξω δαιμόνων τε συμφοραῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ τὰν θεῶν ἄκαμπ-
τον φρένα καὶ βροτῶν
ἄγεις, Κύπρι· σὺν δ'
ὁ ποικιλόπτερος ἀμφιβαλὼν
ὠκυτάτῳ πτερῷ·
ποτᾶται 'πὶ γαῖαν εὐάχητόν θ'
ἁλμυρὸν ἐπὶ πόντον.
θέλγει δ' Ἔρως, ᾧ μαινομένᾳ κραδίᾳ
πτανὸς ἐφορμάσῃ
χρυσοφαής,
φύσιν ὀρεσκόων
σκυλάκων πελαγίων θ' ὅσα τε γᾶ τρέφει,
τὰν Ἅλιος αἰθόμενος δέρκεται,
ἄνδρας τε· συμπάντων δὲ
βασιληίδα τιμάν, Κύπρι,
τῶνδε μόνα κρατύνεις.

Bethink thee: if my counsel thou wilt heed,
Harsh to thy stricken son thou wilt not be.

THESEUS

Bear him, that I may see before mine eyes
Him who denied that he had stained my bed,
By words and heaven's requital to convict him.

[*Exit* MESSENGER.

CHORUS

Love, under thy dominion unbending hearts bow low—
Gods' hearts, and hearts of mortals; when, flashing
through thy portals
On glory-gleaming pinion, flits Eros to and fro,
Love, under thy dominion unbending hearts bow low.

Gold-glittering wings wide-soaring, they rain down
witchery: [phant sailing,
O'er maddened hearts prevailing, o'er earth trium-
O'er music of the roaring of spray-bemantled sea,
Gold-glittering wings wide-soaring, they rain down
witchery.

He kindleth with his yearning all things of earth-
born race: [he filleth:
The mountain's whelps he thrilleth, the ocean's brood
Where'er the sun's eye burning down looketh on
earth's face, [born race.
He kindleth with his yearning all things of earth-

They bend—all, all are bending, Love-queen, beneath
thy hand! [royal
O crownèd brows, whom loyal vassals acclaim sole-
By spells all-comprehending in sky and sea and land;
They bend—all, all are bending, Love-queen, beneath
thy hand!

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

σὲ τὸν εὐπατρίδαν Αἰγέως κέλομαι
παῖδ' ἐπακοῦσαι·
Λητοῦς δὲ κόρη σ' Ἄρτεμις αὐδῶ.
Θησεῦ, τί τάλας τοῖσδε συνήδει,
παῖδ' οὐχ ὁσίως σὸν ἀποκτείνας,
ψευδέσι μύθοις ἀλόχου πεισθεὶς
ἀφανῆ; φανερὰν δ' ἔσχεθες ἄτην.
πῶς οὐχ ὑπὸ γῆς τάρταρα κρύπτεις
δέμας αἰσχυνθείς,
ἢ πτηνὸς ἄνω μεταβὰς βίοτον
πήματος ἔξω πόδα τοῦδ' ἀνέχεις;
ὡς ἔν γ' ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσιν οὔ σοι
κτητὸν βιότου μέρος ἐστίν.

ἄκουε, Θησεῦ, σῶν κακῶν κατάστασιν·
καίτοι προκόψω γ' οὐδέν, ἀλγυνῶ δὲ σέ.
ἀλλ' εἰς τόδ' ἦλθον, παιδὸς ἐκδεῖξαι φρένα
τοῦ σοῦ δικαίαν, ὡς ὑπ' εὐκλείας θάνῃ,
καὶ σῆς γυναικὸς οἶστρον ἢ τρόπον τινὰ
γενναιότητα· τῆς γὰρ ἐχθίστης θεῶν
ἡμῖν, ὅσαισι παρθένειος ἡδονή,
δηχθεῖσα κέντροις παιδὸς ἠράσθη σέθεν.
γνώμῃ δὲ νικᾶν τὴν Κύπριν πειρωμένη
τροφοῦ διώλετ' οὐχ ἑκοῦσα μηχαναῖς,
ἣ σῷ δι' ὅρκων παιδὶ σημαίνει νόσον.
ὁ δ', ὥσπερ ὢν δίκαιος, οὐκ ἐφέσπετο
λόγοισιν, οὐδ' αὖ πρὸς σέθεν κακούμενος
ὅρκων ἀφεῖλε πίστιν, εὐσεβὴς γεγώς.
ἡ δ' εἰς ἔλεγχον μὴ πέσῃ φοβουμένη
ψευδεῖς γραφὰς ἔγραψε καὶ διώλεσε
δόλοισι σὸν παῖδ'· ἀλλ' ὅμως ἔπεισέ σε.

Enter ARTEMIS, *veiled in a nectar-breathing cloud.*

ARTEMIS

Thou high-born scion of Aegeus, I call upon thee:
Theseus, give ear unto me.
It is Artemis, Leto's Daughter, that nameth thy name:
Why dost thou joy in thy shame,
Who hast murdered thy son unrighteously, thereto moved
By the lies of thy wife unproved?
Ruin and wrack in the sight of the sun hast thou found.
How wilt thou hide underground
Thy dishonour in hell, or upsoaring mid clouds, veil there
Thy life of remorse and despair?
For the part that was erstwhile thine in the good man's lot,
Behold, it is not.
Theseus, hear thou the posture of thy woes:—
Yet have I no help for thee, only pain;
But I have come to show the righteousness
Of thy son, that in fair fame he may die,
And thy wife's fever-flame,—yet in some sort
Her nobleness. She, stung by goads of her
Whom we, who joy in purity, abhor
Most of all Gods, was lovesick for thy son.
Her reason fought her passion, and she died
Through schemes wherein she had no part: her nurse
Told under oath-seal to thy son her pangs:
He, even as was righteous, would not heed
The tempting; no, nor when sore-wronged of thee
Broke he the oath's pledge, for he feared the Gods.
But she, adread to be of sin convict,
Wrote that false writing, and by treachery so
Destroyed thy son:—and thou believedst her!

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἴμοι.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

δάκνει σε, Θησεῦ, μῦθος; ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἥσυχος,
τοὐνθένδ' ἀκούσας ὡς ἂν οἰμώξῃς πλέον.
ἆρ' οἶσθα πατρὸς τρεῖς ἀρὰς σαφεῖς ἔχων;
ὧν τὴν μίαν παρεῖλες, ὦ κάκιστε σύ,
εἰς παῖδα τὸν σόν, ἐξὸν εἰς ἐχθρόν τινα.
πατὴρ μὲν οὖν σοι πόντιος φρονῶν καλῶς
ἔδωχ' ὅσονπερ χρῆν, ἐπείπερ ᾔνεσεν·
σὺ δ' ἔν τ' ἐκείνῳ κἀν ἐμοὶ φαίνει κακός,
ὃς οὔτε πίστιν οὔτε μάντεων ὄπα
ἔμεινας, οὐκ ἤλεγξας, οὐ χρόνῳ μακρῷ
σκέψιν παρέσχες, ἀλλὰ θᾶσσον ἤ σ' ἐχρῆν
ἀρὰς ἐφῆκας παιδὶ καὶ κατέκτανες.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δέσποιν', ὀλοίμην.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

δείν' ἔπραξας, ἀλλ' ὅμως
ἔτ' ἔστι σοὶ καὶ τῶνδε συγγνώμης τυχεῖν·
Κύπρις γὰρ ἤθελ' ὥστε γίγνεσθαι τάδε,
πληροῦσα θυμόν. θεοῖσι δ' ὧδ' ἔχει νόμος·
οὐδεὶς ἀπαντᾶν βούλεται προθυμίᾳ
τῇ τοῦ θέλοντος, ἀλλ' ἀφιστάμεσθ' ἀεί.
ἐπεὶ σάφ' ἴσθι, Ζῆνα μὴ φοβουμένη
οὐκ ἄν ποτ' ἦλθον εἰς τόδ' αἰσχύνης ἐγὼ
ὥστ' ἄνδρα πάντων φίλτατον βροτῶν ἐμοὶ
θανεῖν ἐᾶσαι. τὴν δὲ σὴν ἁμαρτίαν
τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι μὲν πρῶτον ἐκλύει κάκης·
ἔπειτα δ' ἡ θανοῦσ' ἀνήλωσεν γυνὴ
λόγων ἐλέγχους ὥστε σὴν πεῖσαι φρένα.
μάλιστα μέν νυν σοὶ τάδ' ἔρρωγεν κακά,

THESEUS

Ah me!

ARTEMIS

Is it torture, Theseus?—Nay, but hear me out,
That hearing all thou mayst the more lament.
Thy sire's sure curses three—rememberest them?
One hast thou thus misused, O villain thou,
Against thy son, which might have quelled a foe!
Thy sire the Sea-king, in his love's despite,
Gave as he needs must, seeing he had pledged him:
Yet wicked in his eyes and mine art thou,
Who wouldst not wait for proof, nor prophet's voice,
Nor yet make inquisition, nor let time
Slowly reveal all, but with criminal haste
Didst hurl the curse upon thy son, and slay.

THESEUS

Queen, ruin seize me!

ARTEMIS

Deep thy sin: but yet
Even thou for this mayst win forgiveness still:
For Cypris willed that all this should befall
To glut her spite. And this the Gods' wont is:—
None doth presume to thwart the fixed design
Willed by his fellow: still aloof we stand.
Else be thou sure that, but for dread of Zeus,
I never would have known this depth of shame,
To suffer one, of all men best beloved
Of me, to die. But thy transgression, first,
Thine ignorance from utter sin redeems;
Then, by her death thy wife made void all test
Of these her words, and won thy credence so.
Now, most on thee this storm of woe hath burst;

λύπη δὲ κἀμοί· τοὺς γὰρ εὐσεβεῖς θεοὶ
θνῄσκοντας οὐ χαίρουσι· τούς γε μὴν κακοὺς
αὐτοῖς τέκνοισι καὶ δόμοις ἐξόλλυμεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὁ τάλας ὅδε δὴ στείχει,
σάρκας νεαρὰς ξανθόν τε κάρα
διαλυμανθείς. ὦ πόνος οἴκων,
οἷον ἐκράνθη δίδυμον μελάθροις
πένθος θεόθεν καταληπτόν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ·
δύστηνος ἐγώ, πατρὸς ἐξ ἀδίκου
χρησμοῖς ἀδίκοις διελυμάνθην.
ἀπόλωλα τάλας, οἴμοι μοι.
διά μου κεφαλῆς ᾄσσουσ' ὀδύναι,
κατὰ δ' ἐγκέφαλον πηδᾷ σφάκελος.
σχές, ἀπειρηκὸς σῶμ' ἀναπαύσω.
ἒ ἔ·
ὦ στυγνὸν ὄχημ' ἵππειον, ἐμῆς
βόσκημα χερός,
διά μ' ἔφθειρας, κατὰ δ' ἔκτεινας.
φεῦ φεῦ· πρὸς θεῶν, ἀτρέμας, δμῶες,
χροὸς ἑλκώδους ἅπτεσθε χεροῖν.
τίς ἐφέστηκεν δεξιὰ πλευροῖς;
πρόσφορά μ' αἴρετε, σύντονα δ' ἕλκετε
τὸν κακοδαίμονα καὶ κατάρατον

Yet grief is mine: for when the righteous die
The Gods joy not. The wicked, and withal
Their children and their homes, do we destroy.

CHORUS

  Lo, lo, the stricken one borne
  Hitherward, with his young flesh torn
And his golden head of its glory shorn!
  Ah, griefs of the house!—what doom
  Twofold on thine halls hath come
By the Gods' will shrouded in sorrow's gloom!

Enter bearers with HIPPOLYTUS.

HIPPOLYTUS

        Woe, woe for a son
          By the doom of his sire
        All marred and undone!
          Through mine head leapeth fire
Of the agony-flashes, and throbbeth my brain like a hard-stricken lyre.

        Let me rest—ah forbear!—
          For my strength is sped.
        Cursèd horses, ye were
          Of mine own hands fed,
Yet me have ye wholly destroyed, yet me have ye stricken dead!

        For the Gods' sake, bear
          Me full gently, each thrall!
        Thou to right, have a care!—
          Soft let your hands fall;
Tenderly bear the sore-mangled, on-stepping in time, one and all,

        The unhappy on-bearing,
          And cursèd, I ween,

πατρὸς ἀμπλακίαις. Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, τάδ' ὁρᾷς;
ὅδ' ὁ σεμνὸς ἐγὼ καὶ θεοσέπτωρ,
ὅδ' ὁ σωφροσύνῃ πάντας ὑπερσχὼν
προῦπτον ἐς Ἅιδην στείχω κατὰ γῆς,
ὀλέσας βίοτον· μόχθους δ' ἄλλως
τῆς εὐσεβίας
εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἐπόνησα.
αἰαῖ αἰαῖ·
καὶ νῦν ὀδύνα μ' ὀδύνα βαίνει.
μέθετέ με τάλανα·
καί μοι Θάνατος Παιὰν ἔλθοι.
προσαπόλλυτέ μ' ὄλλυτε τὸν δυσδαί-
μονά μ'· ἀμφιτόμου λόγχας ἔραμαι
διαμοιρᾶσαι,
διά τ' εὐνᾶσαι τὸν ἐμὸν βίοτον.
ὦ πατρὸς ἐμοῦ δύστανος ἀρά·
μιαιφόνων [τε] συγγόνων,
παλαιῶν προγεννητόρων
ἐξορίζεται κακὸν οὐδὲ μέλλει,
ἔμολέ τ' ἐπ' ἐμὲ
τί ποτε τὸν οὐδὲν ὄντ' ἐπαίτιον κακῶν;
ἰώ μοι, τί φῶ;
πῶς ἀπαλλάξω βιοτὰν
ἐμὰν τοῦδ' ἀναλγήτου πάθους;
εἴθε με κοιμίσειε τὸν δυσδαίμον'
Ἅιδου μέλαινα νύκτερός τ' ἀνάγκα.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

ὦ τλῆμον, οἵᾳ συμφορᾷ συνεζύγης·
τὸ δ' εὐγενές σε τῶν φρενῶν ἀπώλεσεν.

Of his father's own erring:—
Ah Zeus, hast thou seen?
Innocent I, ever fearing the Gods, who was wholly heart-clean

Above all men beside,—
Lo, how am I thrust
Unto Hades, to hide
My life in the dust!
All vainly I reverenced God, and in vain unto man was I just.

Let the stricken one be!—
Ah, mine anguish again!—
Give ye sleep unto me,
Death-salve for my pain,
The sleep of the sword for the wretched—I long, oh I long to be slain.

Dire curse of my father!—
Sins, long ago wrought
Of mine ancestors, gather:
Their doom tarries not,
But the scourge overfloweth the innocent—wherefore on me is it brought?

Ah for words of a spell,
That my soul might take flight
From the tortures, with fell
Unrelentings that smite!
Oh for the blackness of Hades, the sleep of Necessity's night!

ARTEMIS

Unhappy, bowed 'neath what disaster's yoke!
Thine own heart's nobleness hath ruined thee.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἔα·
ὦ θεῖον ὀδμῆς πνεῦμα· καὶ γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς
ὢν ᾐσθόμην σου κἀνεκουφίσθην δέμας·
ἔστ' ἐν τόποισι τοισίδ' Ἄρτεμις θεά;

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

ὦ τλῆμον, ἔστι, σοί γε φιλτάτη θεῶν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὁρᾷς με, δέσποιν', ὡς ἔχω, τὸν ἄθλιον;

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

ὁρῶ· κατ' ὄσσων δ' οὐ θέμις βαλεῖν δάκρυ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι σοι κυναγὸς οὐδ' ὑπηρέτης,

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

οὐ δῆτ'· ἀτάρ μοι προσφιλής γ' ἀπόλλυσαι.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐδ' ἱππονώμας οὐδ' ἀγαλμάτων φύλαξ.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

Κύπρις γὰρ ἡ πανοῦργος ὧδ' ἐμήσατο.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὤμοι· φρονῶ δὴ δαίμον' ἥ μ' ἀπώλεσε.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

τιμῆς ἐμέμφθη, σωφρονοῦντι δ' ἤχθετο.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τρεῖς ὄντας ἡμᾶς ὤλεσ,' ᾔσθημαι, Κύπρις.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

πατέρα γε καὶ σὲ καὶ τρίτην ξυνάορον.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ᾤμωξα τοίνυν καὶ πατρὸς δυσπραξίας.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

ἐξηπατήθη δαίμονος βουλεύμασιν.

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah, perfume-breath celestial!—mid my pains
I feel thee, and mine anguish is assuaged.
Lo in this place the Goddess Artemis!

ARTEMIS

Yea, hapless one, of Gods best friend to thee.

HIPPOLYTUS

O Queen, seest thou my plight—the stricken one?

ARTEMIS

I see—but tears are to mine eyes forbid.

HIPPOLYTUS

None now shall hark thine hounds, nor do thee service—

ARTEMIS

Ah no! Yet dear to me thou perishest.

HIPPOLYTUS

Nor tend thy steeds, nor guard thine images.

ARTEMIS

This all-pernicious Cypris hath contrived—

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah me! what Goddess blasts me now I know!

ARTEMIS

Jealous for honour, wroth with chastity.

HIPPOLYTUS

Three hath one hand destroyed; I see it now.

ARTEMIS

Thy father—thee—thy father's wife the third.

HIPPOLYTUS

Yea, and I wail my father's misery.

ARTEMIS

By plots of deity was he beguiled.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ
ὦ δυστάλας σὺ τῆσδε συμφορᾶς, πάτερ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ
ὄλωλα, τέκνον, οὐδέ μοι χάρις βίου.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ
στένω σὲ μᾶλλον ἢ 'μὲ τῆς ἁμαρτίας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ
εἰ γὰρ γενοίμην, τέκνον, ἀντὶ σοῦ νεκρός.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ
ὦ δῶρα πατρὸς σοῦ Ποσειδῶνος πικρά.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ
ὡς μήποτ' ἐλθεῖν ὤφελ' εἰς τοὐμὸν στόμα.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ
τί δ'; ἔκτανές τἄν μ', ὡς τότ' ἦσθ' ὠργισμένος.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ
δόξης γὰρ ἦμεν πρὸς θεῶν ἐσφαλμένοι.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ
φεῦ·
εἴθ' ἦν ἀραῖον δαίμοσιν βροτῶν γένος.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ
ἔασον· οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ γῆς ὑπὸ ζόφον
θεᾶς ἄτιμοι Κύπριδος ἐκ προθυμίας
ὀργαὶ κατασκήψουσιν εἰς τὸ σὸν δέμας
σῆς εὐσεβείας κἀγαθῆς φρενὸς χάριν.
ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτῆς ἄλλον ἐξ ἐμῆς χερὸς
ὃς ἂν μάλιστα φίλτατος κυρῇ βροτῶν
τόξοις ἀφύκτοις τοῖσδε τιμωρήσομαι.
σοὶ δ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν κακῶν
τιμὰς μεγίστας ἐν πόλει Τροιζηνίᾳ
δώσω· κόραι γὰρ ἄζυγες γάμων πάρος
κόμας κεροῦνταί σοι, δι' αἰῶνος μακροῦ
πένθη μέγιστα δακρύων καρπουμένῳ.

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah father, woe is thee for this mischance !

THESEUS

I am slain, my son : no joy have I in life !

HIPPOLYTUS

More than myself I mourn thee for thine error.

THESEUS

Would God I could but die for thee, my son !

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah, bitter gifts of that Sea-god, thy sire !

THESEUS

Ah that the word had never passed my lips !

HIPPOLYTUS

Wherefore ?—thou wouldst for wrath have slain me still.

THESEUS

Yea, for the Gods had caused my wit to stumble.

HIPPOLYTUS

Oh that men's curses could but strike the Gods !

ARTEMIS

Let be : for even in the nether gloom
Not unavenged shall be the stroke that fell
Upon thy frame through rage of Cypris' spite,
For thy pure soul's and for thy reverence' sake.
For upon one, her minion, with mine hand—
Whoso is dearest of all men to her—
With these unerring shafts will I avenge me.
And to thee, hapless one, for these thy woes
High honours will I give in Troezen-town.
Ere their espousals shall all maids unwed
For thee cut off their hair : through age on age
Full harvests shalt thou reap of tears of grieving.

ἀεὶ δὲ μουσοποιὸς εἰς σὲ παρθένων
ἔσται μέριμνα, κοὐκ ἀνώνυμος πεσὼν
ἔρως ὁ Φαίδρας εἰς σὲ σιγηθήσεται.
σὺ δ', ὦ γεραιοῦ τέκνον Αἰγέως, λαβὲ
σὸν παῖδ' ἐν ἀγκάλαισι καὶ προσέλκυσαι·
ἄκων γὰρ ὤλεσάς νιν· ἀνθρώποισι δὲ
θεῶν διδόντων εἰκὸς ἐξαμαρτάνειν.
καὶ σοὶ παραινῶ πατέρα μὴ στυγεῖν σέθεν,
Ἱππόλυτ'· ἔχεις γὰρ μοῖραν ᾗ διεφθάρης.
καὶ χαῖρ'· ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐ θέμις φθιτοὺς ὁρᾶν
οὐδ' ὄμμα χραίνειν θανασίμοισιν ἐκπνοαῖς·
ὁρῶ δέ σ' ἤδη τοῦδε πλησίον κακοῦ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

χαίρουσα καὶ σὺ στεῖχε, παρθέν' ὀλβία·
μακρὰν δὲ λείπεις ῥᾳδίως ὁμιλίαν.
λύω δὲ νεῖκος πατρὶ χρῃζούσης σέθεν·
καὶ γὰρ πάροιθε σοῖς ἐπειθόμην λόγοις.
αἰαῖ, κατ' ὄσσων κιγχάνει μ' ἤδη σκότος·
λαβοῦ, πάτερ, μου καὶ κατόρθωσον δέμας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὤμοι, τέκνον, τί δρᾷς με τὸν δυσδαίμονα;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὄλωλα καὶ δὴ νερτέρων ὁρῶ πύλας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦ τὴν ἐμὴν ἄναγνον ἐκλιπὼν φρένα;[1]

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεί σε τοῦδ' ἐλευθερῶ φόνου.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί φής; ἀφίης αἵματός μ' ἐλεύθερον;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τὴν τοξόδαμνον παρθένον μαρτύρομαι.

[1] Some MSS. have χέρα;

Ever of thee song-waking memory
Shall live in virgins; nor shall Phaedra's love
Forgotten in thy story be unhymned.
But thou, O son of ancient Aegeus, take
Thy child into thine arms, and fold him close.
Not of thy will thou slewest him, and well
May men transgress when Gods are thrusting on.
Thee too I charge, Hippolytus—hate not
Thy father: 'tis by fate thou perishest.
Farewell: I may not gaze upon the dead,
Nor may with dying gasps pollute my sight:
And now I see that thou art near the end.

[*Exit* ARTEMIS.

HIPPOLYTUS

Farewell to thy departing, Maiden blest.
Light falls on thee long fellowship's severance!
Lo, I forgive my father at thy suit,
As heretofore have I obeyed thy word.
Ah, o'er mine eyes even now the darkness draws!
Take, father, take my body and upraise.

THESEUS

Ah me! what dost thou, child, to hapless me?

HIPPOLYTUS

I am gone—yea, I behold the gates of death!

THESEUS

Wilt leave me—and my conscience murder-stained?

HIPPOLYTUS

No, no! I do absolve thee of my death.

THESEUS

How say'st thou?—dost assoil me of thy blood?

HIPPOLYTUS

I call to witness Bow-queen Artemis.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς γενναῖος ἐκφαίνει πατρί.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τοιῶνδε παίδων γνησίων εὔχου τυχεῖν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὤμοι φρενὸς σῆς εὐσεβοῦς τε κἀγαθῆς.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σύ, χαῖρε πολλά μοι, πάτερ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

μή νυν προδῷς με, τέκνον, ἀλλὰ καρτέρει.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

κεκαρτέρηται τἄμ'· ὄλωλα γάρ, πάτερ·
κρύψον δέ μου πρόσωπον ὡς τάχος πέπλοις.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ κλείν' Ἀθηνῶν Παλλάδος θ' ὁρίσματα,
οἵου στερήσεσθ' ἀνδρός. ὦ τλήμων ἐγώ·
ὡς πολλά, Κύπρι, σῶν κακῶν μεμνήσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κοινὸν τόδ' ἄχος πᾶσι πολίταις
ἦλθεν ἀέλπτως.
πολλῶν δακρύων ἔσται πίτυλος·
τῶν γὰρ μεγάλων ἀξιοπενθεῖς
φῆμαι μᾶλλον κατέχουσιν.

ὦ μάκαρ, οἵας ἔλαχες τιμάς,
Ἱππόλυθ' ἥρως, διὰ σωφροσύνην·
οὔποτε θνητοῖς
ἀρετῆς ἄλλη δύναμις μείζων·
ἦλθε γὰρ ἢ πρόσθ' ἢ μετόπισθεν
τῆς εὐσεβίας χάρις ἐσθλή.

THESEUS

Dearest, how noble show'st thou to thy sire!

HIPPOLYTUS

Pray to have such sons—sons in wedlock born.

THESEUS

Woe for thy reverent soul, thy righteous heart!

HIPPOLYTUS

Father, farewell thou too—untold farewells!

THESEUS

Forsake me not, my son!—be strong to bear!

HIPPOLYTUS

My strength is overborne—I am gone, my father.
Cover my face with mantles with all speed. [*Dies.*

THESEUS

O bounds of Athens, Pallas' glorious realm,
What hero will be lost to you! Woe's me!
Cypris, how oft shall I recall thy wrong!

CHORUS

On the city hath lighted a stroke without warning,
On all hearts desolation.
Rain down, O ye fast-dropping tears of our mourning!
When the mighty are fallen, their burial-oblation
Is the wail of a nation.[1]

[*Exeunt* OMNES.

[1] 1462-66 allude to the death of Pericles, which happened shortly before the representation of this play. The poet in fact changed, to meet the occasion, the original ending, which ran thus:—

O blest one, what honours have fallen to thee,
O hero, because of thy chastity;
Never shall aught be more of worth
Than virtue unto the sons of earth;
For soon or late on the fear of God
Goodly reward shall be bestowed.
[Stobaeus, *Florilegium.*]

MEDEA

ARGUMENT

WHEN *the Heroes, who sailed in the ship Argo to bring home the Golden Fleece, came to the land of Colchis, they found that to win that treasure was a deed passing the might of mortal man, so terribly was it guarded by monsters magical, even fire-breathing bulls and an unsleeping dragon. But Aphrodite caused Medea the sorceress, daughter of Aeetes the king of the land, to love Jason their captain, so that by her magic he overcame the bulls and the dragon. Then Jason took the Fleece, and Medea withal, for that he had pledged him to wed her in the land of Greece. But as they fled, Absyrtus her brother pursued them with a host of war, yet by Medea's devising was he slain. So they came to the land of Iolcos, and to Pelias, who held the kingdom which was Jason's of right. But Medea by her magic wrought upon Pelias' daughters so that they slew their father. Yet by reason of men's horror of the deed might not Jason and Medea abide in the land, and they came to Corinth. But there all men rejoiced for the coming of a hero so mighty in war and a lady renowned for wisdom unearthly, for that Medea was grandchild of the Sun-god. But after ten years, Creon the king of the land spake to Jason, saying, "Lo, I will give thee my daughter to wife, and thou shalt reign after me, if thou wilt put away thy wife Medea; but her and her two sons will I banish from the land." So Jason consented. And of this befell things strange and awful, which are told herein.*

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΠΑΙΔΕΣ ΜΗΔΕΙΑΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

NURSE OF MEDEA'S CHILDREN.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN.[1]

MEDEA.

CHORUS OF CORINTHIAN LADIES.

CREON, *King of Corinth.*

JASON.

AEGEUS, *King of Athens.*

MESSENGER.

CHILDREN OF MEDEA.

The Scene is in front of Jason's House at Corinth.

[1] *Paedagogus.*—A trusted servant, responsible for keeping the boys out of harm's way: he was present at their sports, accompanied them to and from school, and never let them be out of his sight. A similar institution is familiar to Englishmen resident in India.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

Εἴθ' ὤφελ' Ἀργοῦς μὴ διαπτάσθαι σκάφος
Κόλχων ἐς αἶαν κυανέας Συμπληγάδας,
μηδ' ἐν νάπαισι Πηλίου πεσεῖν ποτε
τμηθεῖσα πεύκη, μηδ' ἐρετμῶσαι χέρας
ἀνδρῶν ἀριστέων οἳ τὸ πάγχρυσον δέρος
Πελίᾳ μετῆλθον. οὐ γὰρ ἂν δέσποιν' ἐμὴ
Μήδεια πύργους γῆς ἔπλευσ' Ἰωλκίας
ἔρωτι θυμὸν ἐκπλαγεῖσ' Ἰάσονος,
οὐδ' ἂν κτανεῖν πείσασα Πελιάδας κόρας
πατέρα κατῴκει τήνδε γῆν Κορινθίαν
ξὺν ἀνδρὶ καὶ τέκνοισιν, ἁνδάνουσα μὲν
φυγῇ πολιτῶν ὧν ἀφίκετο χθόνα,
αὐτή τε πάντα ξυμφέρουσ' Ἰάσονι·
ἥπερ μεγίστη γίγνεται σωτηρία,
ὅταν γυνὴ πρὸς ἄνδρα μὴ διχοστατῇ.
νῦν δ' ἐχθρὰ πάντα, καὶ νοσεῖ τὰ φίλτατα.
προδοὺς γὰρ αὑτοῦ τέκνα δεσπότιν τ' ἐμὴν
γάμοις Ἰάσων βασιλικοῖς εὐνάζεται,
γήμας Κρέοντος παῖδ', ὃς αἰσυμνᾷ χθονός·
Μήδεια δ' ἡ δύστηνος ἠτιμασμένη
βοᾷ μὲν ὅρκους, ἀνακαλεῖ δὲ δεξιᾶς
πίστιν μεγίστην, καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρεται
οἵας ἀμοιβῆς ἐξ Ἰάσονος κυρεῖ.
κεῖται δ' ἄσιτος, σῶμ' ὑφεῖσ' ἀλγηδόσι,

MEDEA

Enter NURSE *of Medea's Children.*

NURSE

WOULD God that Argo's hull had never flown
Through those blue Clashing Rocks to Colchis-land,
Nor that the axe-hewn pine in Pelion's glens
Ever had fallen, nor filled with oars the hands
Of hero-princes, who at Pelias' hest
Quested the Golden Fleece! My mistress then,
Medea, ne'er had sailed to Iolcos' towers
With love for Jason thrilled through all her soul,
Nor had on Pelias' daughters wrought to slay
Their sire, nor now in this Corinthian land
Dwelt with her lord and children, gladdening
By this her exile them whose land received her,
Yea, and in all things serving Jason's weal,
Which is the chief salvation of the home,
When wife stands not at variance with her lord.

Now all is hatred: love is sickness-stricken.
For Jason, traitor to his babes and her,
My mistress, weddeth with a child of kings,
Daughter of Creon ruler of the land.
And, slighted thus, Medea, hapless wife,
Cries on the oaths, invokes that mightiest pledge
Of the right hand, and calls the Gods to witness
What recompense from Jason she receives.
Fasting, with limbs in grief's abandonment

τὸν πάντα συντήκουσα δακρύοις χρόνον,
ἐπεὶ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ᾔσθετ᾽ ἠδικημένη,
οὔτ᾽ ὄμμ᾽ ἐπαίρουσ᾽ οὔτ᾽ ἀπαλλάσσουσα γῆς
πρόσωπον· ὡς δὲ πέτρος ἢ θαλάσσιος
κλύδων ἀκούει νουθετουμένη φίλων·
ἢν μή ποτε στρέψασα πάλλευκον δέρην
αὐτὴ πρὸς αὑτὴν πατέρ᾽ ἀποιμώζῃ φίλον
καὶ γαῖαν οἴκους θ᾽, οὓς προδοῦσ᾽ ἀφίκετο
μετ᾽ ἀνδρὸς ὅς σφε νῦν ἀτιμάσας ἔχει.
ἔγνωκε δ᾽ ἡ τάλαινα συμφορᾶς ὕπο
οἷον πατρῴας μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι χθονός.
στυγεῖ δὲ παῖδας οὐδ᾽ ὁρῶσ᾽ εὐφραίνεται.
δέδοικα δ᾽ αὐτὴν μή τι βουλεύσῃ νέον·
βαρεῖα γὰρ φρήν, οὐδ᾽ ἀνέξεται κακῶς
πάσχουσ᾽· ἐγᾦδα τήνδε, δειμαίνω τέ νιν,
[μὴ θηκτὸν ὤσῃ φάσγανον δι᾽ ἥπατος,
σιγῇ δόμους εἰσβᾶσ᾽, ἵν᾽ ἔστρωται λέχος,
ἢ καὶ τύραννον τόν τε γήμαντα κτάνῃ
κἄπειτα μείζω συμφορὰν λάβῃ τινά.]
δεινὴ γάρ· οὔτοι ῥᾳδίως γε συμβαλὼν
ἔχθραν τις αὐτῇ καλλίνικον οἴσεται.
ἀλλ᾽ οἵδε παῖδες ἐκ τρόχων πεπαυμένοι
στείχουσι, μητρὸς οὐδὲν ἐννοούμενοι
κακῶν· νέα γὰρ φροντὶς οὐκ ἀλγεῖν φιλεῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

παλαιὸν οἴκων κτῆμα δεσποίνης ἐμῆς,
τί πρὸς πύλαισι τήνδ᾽ ἄγουσ᾽ ἐρημίαν
ἕστηκας, αὐτὴ θρεομένη σαυτῇ κακά;
πῶς σοῦ μόνη Μήδεια λείπεσθαι θέλει;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τέκνων ὀπαδὲ πρέσβυ τῶν Ἰάσονος,
χρηστοῖσι δούλοις ξυμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν

Flung down, she weeps and wastes through all the days
Since first she knew her lord's wrong done to her,
Never uplifting eye, nor turning ever
From earth her face. No more than rock or sea-wave
Hearkeneth she to friends that counsel her;
Saving at whiles, when, lifting her white neck,
To herself she wails her father once beloved,
Her land, her home, forsaking which she came
Hither with him who holds her now contemned.
Alas for her! she knows, by affliction taught,
How good is fatherland unforfeited.
She loathes her babes, joys not beholding them.
And what she may devise I dread to think.
Grim is her spirit, one that will not brook
Mishandling: yea, I know her, and I fear
Lest to her bridal bower she softly steal,
And through her own heart thrust the whetted knife,
Or slay the king and him that weds his child,
And get herself some doom yet worse thereby;
For dangerous is she: who begins a feud
With her, not soon shall sing the triumph-song.
But lo, her boys, their racing-sport put by,
Draw near, all careless of their mother's wrongs,
For the young heart loves not to brood in grief.

Enter CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN, *with boys.*

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

O ancient chattel of my mistress' home,
Why at the gates thus lonely standest thou,
Thyself unto thyself discoursing ills?
How wills Medea to be left of thee?

NURSE

O grey attendant thou of Jason's sons,
The hearts of faithful servants still are touched

κακῶς πίτνοντα καὶ φρενῶν ἀνθάπτεται.
ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰς τοῦτ' ἐκβέβηκ' ἀλγηδόνος,
ὥσθ' ἵμερός μ' ὑπῆλθε γῇ τε κοὐρανῷ
λέξαι μολούσῃ δεῦρο Μηδείας τύχας.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὔπω γὰρ ἡ τάλαινα παύεται γόων;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ζηλῶ σ'· ἐν ἀρχῇ πῆμα κοὐδέπω μεσοῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ μῶρος, εἰ χρὴ δεσπότας εἰπεῖν τόδε·
ὡς οὐδὲν οἶδε τῶν νεωτέρων κακῶν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν, ὦ γεραιέ; μὴ φθόνει φράσαι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐδέν· μετέγνων καὶ τὰ πρόσθ' εἰρημένα.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

μή, πρὸς γενείου, κρύπτε σύνδουλον σέθεν·
σιγὴν γάρ, εἰ χρή, τῶνδε θήσομαι πέρι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἤκουσά του λέγοντος οὐ δοκῶν κλύειν,
πεσσοὺς προσελθών, ἔνθα δὴ παλαίτατοι
θάσσουσι, σεμνὸν ἀμφὶ Πειρήνης ὕδωρ,
ὡς τούσδε παῖδας γῆς ἐλᾶν Κορινθίας
σὺν μητρὶ μέλλοι τῆσδε κοίρανος χθονὸς
Κρέων. ὁ μέντοι μῦθος εἰ σαφὴς ὅδε
οὐκ οἶδα· βουλοίμην δ' ἂν οὐκ εἶναι τόδε.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

καὶ ταῦτ' Ἰάσων παῖδας ἐξανέξεται
πάσχοντας, εἰ καὶ μητρὶ διαφορὰν ἔχει;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

παλαιὰ καινῶν λείπεται κηδευμάτων,
κοὐκ ἔστ' ἐκεῖνος τοῖσδε δώμασιν φίλος.

By ill-betiding fortunes of their lords.
For I have sunk to such a depth of grief,
That yearning took me hitherward to come
And tell to earth and heaven my lady's plight.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Ceaseth not yet the hapless one from moan?

NURSE

Cease!—her pain scarce begun, far from its height!

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Ah fool!—if one may say it of his lords—
Little she knoweth of the latest blow.

NURSE

What is it, ancient? Grudge not thou to tell me.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Naught: I repent me of the word that 'scaped me.

NURSE

Nay, by thy beard, hide not from fellow-thrall—
Silence, if need be, will I keep thereof.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

I heard one saying—feigning not to hear,
As I drew near the old stone seats, where sit
The ancients round Peirene's hallowed fount,—
"Creon, this land's lord, is at point to banish
Mother and sons from soil Corinthian."
Howbeit, if the tale I heard be true
I know not: fain were I it were not so.

NURSE

Will Jason brook such dealing with his sons,
Though from their mother he be wholly estranged?

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Old bonds of love are aye outrun by feet
Of new:—no friend is *he* unto this house.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἀπωλόμεσθ᾿ ἄρ᾿, εἰ κακὸν προσοίσομεν
νέον παλαιῷ, πρὶν τόδ᾿ ἐξηντληκέναι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἀτὰρ σύ γ᾿, οὐ γὰρ καιρὸς εἰδέναι τόδε
δέσποιναν, ἡσύχαζε καὶ σίγα λόγον.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ τέκν᾿, ἀκούεθ᾿ οἷος εἰς ὑμᾶς πατήρ ;
ὄλοιτο μὲν μή· δεσπότης γάρ ἐστ᾿ ἐμός·
ἀτὰρ κακός γ᾿ ὢν εἰς φίλους ἁλίσκεται.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τίς δ᾿ οὐχὶ θνητῶν ; ἄρτι γιγνώσκεις τόδε,
ὡς πᾶς τις αὑτὸν τοῦ πέλας μᾶλλον φιλεῖ,
οἱ μὲν δικαίως, οἱ δὲ καὶ κέρδους χάριν,
εἰ τούσδε γ᾿ εὐνῆς εἵνεκ᾿ οὐ στέργει πατήρ.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἴτ᾿, εὖ γὰρ ἔσται, δωμάτων ἔσω, τέκνα.
σὺ δ᾿ ὡς μάλιστα τούσδ᾿ ἐρημώσας ἔχε,
καὶ μὴ πέλαζε μητρὶ δυσθυμουμένῃ.
ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον ὄμμα νιν ταυρουμένην
τοῖσδ᾿ ὥς τι δρασείουσαν· οὐδὲ παύσεται
χόλου, σάφ᾿ οἶδα, πρὶν κατασκῆψαί τινα.
ἐχθρούς γε μέντοι, μὴ φίλους, δράσειέ τι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἰώ,
δύστανος ἐγὼ μελέα τε πόνων,
ἰώ μοί μοι, πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμαν ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τόδ᾿ ἐκεῖνο, φίλοι παῖδες· μήτηρ
κινεῖ κραδίαν, κινεῖ δὲ χόλον.
σπεύδετε θᾶσσον δώματος εἴσω,
καὶ μὴ πελάσητ᾿ ὄμματος ἐγγύς,

NURSE

Ruined we are then, if we add fresh ill
To old, ere lightened be our ship of this.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

But thou—for 'tis not season that thy lady
Should know—keep silence, and speak not the tale.

NURSE

Hear, babes, what father this is unto you!
I curse him—not: he is my master still:
But to his friends he stands convict of baseness.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

What man is not? Hast learnt this only now,
That no man loves his neighbour as himself?
Good cause have some, with most 'tis greed of gain—
As here: their sire for a bride's sake loves not these.

NURSE

Pass in, dear children, for it shall be well.
But thou, keep these apart to the uttermost:
Bring them not nigh their mother angry-souled.
For late I saw her glare, as glares a bull,
On these, as 'twere for mischief; nor her wrath,
I know, shall cease, until its lightning strike.
To foes may she work ill, and not to friends!

MEDEA (*behind the scenes*)

O hapless I! O miseries heaped on mine head!
Ah me! ah me! would God I were dead!

NURSE

Lo, darlings, the thing that I told you!
Lo the heart of your mother astir!
And astir is her anger: withhold you
From her sight, come not nigh unto her.

μηδὲ προσέλθητ', ἀλλὰ φυλάσσεσθ'
ἄγριον ἦθος στυγεράν τε φύσιν
φρενὸς αὐθάδους.
ἴτε νῦν χωρεῖθ' ὡς τάχος εἴσω.
δῆλον δ' ἀρχῆς ἐξαιρόμενον
νέφος οἰμωγῆς ὡς τάχ' ἀνάψει
μείζονι θυμῷ· τί ποτ' ἐργάσεται
μεγαλόσπλαγχνος δυσκατάπαυστος
ψυχὴ δηχθεῖσα κακοῖσιν;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ,
ἔπαθον τλάμων ἔπαθον μεγάλων
ἄξι' ὀδυρμῶν· ὦ κατάρατοι
παῖδες ὄλοισθε στυγερᾶς ματρὸς
σὺν πατρί, καὶ πᾶς δόμος ἔρροι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἰώ μοί μοι, ἰὼ τλήμων.
τί δέ σοι παῖδες πατρὸς ἀμπλακίας
μετέχουσι; τί τούσδ' ἔχθεις; οἴμοι,
τέκνα, μή τι πάθηθ' ὡς ὑπεραλγῶ.
δεινὰ τυράννων λήματα καί πως
ὀλίγ' ἀρχόμενοι, πολλὰ κρατοῦντες,
χαλεπῶς ὀργὰς μεταβάλλουσιν.
τὸ γὰρ εἰθίσθαι ζῆν ἐπ' ἴσοισιν
κρεῖσσον· ἐμοὶ γοῦν, εἰ μὴ μεγάλως,
ὀχυρῶς γ' εἴη καταγηράσκειν.

Haste, get you within: O beware ye
  Of the thoughts as a wild-beast brood,
Of the nature too ruthless to spare ye
    In its desperate mood.

Pass ye within now, departing
  With all speed. It is plain to discern
How a cloud of lamenting, upstarting
  From its viewless beginnings, shall burn
In lightnings of fury yet fiercer.
  What deeds shall be dared of that soul,
So haughty, when wrong's goads pierce her,
    So hard to control?

[*Exeunt* CHILDREN *with* GUARDIAN.

MEDEA (*behind the scenes*)

Woe! I have suffered, have suffered, foul wrongs that may waken, may waken
  Mighty lamentings full well! O ye children accursed from the womb,
Hence to destruction, ye brood of a loathed one forsaken, forsaken!
  Hence with your father, and perish our home in the [blackness of doom!

NURSE

Ah me, in the father's offences
  What part have the babes, that thine hate
Should blast them?—forlorn innocences,
  How sorely I fear for your fate!
How terrible princes' moods are!—
  Long ruling, unschooled to obey,—
Unforgiving, unsleeping their feuds are:
    Better life's level way.

Be it mine, if in greatness I may not,
  In quiet and peace to grow old.

τῶν γὰρ μετρίων πρῶτα μὲν εἰπεῖν
τοὔνομα νικᾷ, χρῆσθαί τε μακρῷ
λῷστα βροτοῖσιν· τὰ δ' ὑπερβάλλοντ'
οὐδένα καιρὸν δύναται θνητοῖς·
μείζους δ' ἄτας, ὅταν ὀργισθῇ
δαίμων, οἴκοις ἀπέδωκεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔκλυον φωνάν, ἔκλυον δὲ βοὰν
τᾶς δυστάνου
Κολχίδος, οὐδέ πω ἤπιος· ἀλλά, γεραιά,
λέξον· ἐπ' ἀμφιπύλου γὰρ ἔσω μελάθρου γόον
ἔκλυον·
οὐδὲ συνήδομαι, ὦ γύναι, ἄλγεσι δώματος,
ἐπεί μοι φίλον κέκρανται.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐκ εἰσὶ δόμοι· φροῦδα τάδ' ἤδη.
τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἔχει λέκτρα τυράννων,
ἡ δ' ἐν θαλάμοις τήκει βιοτὰν
δέσποινα, φίλων οὐδενὸς οὐδὲν
παραθαλπομένη φρένα μύθοις.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ,
διά μου κεφαλᾶς φλὸξ οὐρανία
βαίη· τί δέ μοι ζῆν ἔτι κέρδος;
φεῦ φεῦ· θανάτῳ καταλυσαίμαν
βιοτὰν στυγερὰν προλιποῦσα.

Sweeter name than "The Mean" shall ye say not,
And to taste it is sweetness untold.
But to men never weal above measure
Availed: on its perilous height
The Gods in their hour of displeasure
The heavier smite.

Enter CHORUS *of Corinthian Ladies.*

CHORUS

I have hearkened the voice of the daughter of Colchis,
the sound of the crying
Of the misery-stricken; nor yet is she stilled. Now
the tale of her tell,
Grey woman; for moaned through the porch from
her chamber the wail of her sighing;
And I cannot, I cannot be glad while the home in
affliction is lying,
The house I have loved so well.

NURSE

Home?—home there is none: it hath vanished
away:
For my lord to a bride of the princes is thrall;
And my lady is pining the livelong day [say
In her bower, and for naught that her friends' lips
On her heart may the dews of comfort fall.

MEDEA (*behind the scenes*)

Would God that the flame of the lightning from
heaven descending, descending,
Might burn through mine head!—for in living
wherein any more is my gain?
Alas and alas! Would God I might bring to an
ending, an ending,
The life that I loathe, and behind me might cast
all its burden of pain!

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄιες, ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ γᾶ καὶ φῶς, στρ.
ἀχὰν οἵαν ἁ δύστανος
μέλπει νύμφα;
τίς σοί ποτε τᾶς ἀπλάτου
κοίτας ἔρος, ὦ ματαία,
σπεύσει θανάτου τελευτάν;
μηδὲν τόδε λίσσου.
εἰ δὲ σὸς πόσις
καινὰ λέχη σεβίζει,
κείνῳ τόδε μὴ χαράσσου·
Ζεύς σοι τάδε συνδικήσει. μὴ λίαν
τάκου δυρομένα σὸν εὐνάταν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ μεγάλα Θέμι καὶ πότνι' Ἄρτεμι,
λεύσσεθ' ἃ πάσχω, μεγάλοις ὅρκοις
ἐνδησαμένα τὸν κατάρατον
πόσιν; ὅν ποτ' ἐγὼ νύμφαν τ' ἐσίδοιμ'
αὐτοῖς μελάθροις διακναιομένους,
οἵ γ' ἐμὲ πρόσθεν τολμῶσ' ἀδικεῖν.
ὦ πάτερ, ὦ πόλις, ὧν ἀπενάσθην
αἰσχρῶς τὸν ἐμὸν κτείνασα κάσιν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

κλύεθ' οἷα λέγει κἀπιβοᾶται
Θέμιν εὐκταίαν Ζῆνά θ', ὃς ὅρκων
θνητοῖς ταμίας νενόμισται;

CHORUS

O Zeus, Earth, Light, did ye hear her, (*Str.*)
How waileth the woe-laden breath
Of the bride in unhappiest plight?
What yearning for vanished delight,
O passion-distraught, should have might
To cause thee to wish death nearer—
The ending of all things, death?
Make thou not for this supplication!
If thine husband hath turned and adored
New love, [that estrangèd he is,]
O harrow thy soul not for this:
It is Zeus that shall right thee, I wis.
Ah, pine not in over-vexation
Of spirit, bewailing thy lord!

MEDEA (*behind the scenes*)

O Lady of Justice, O Artemis' Majesty, see it, O see it—
Look on the wrongs that I suffer, by oaths everlasting who tied
The soul of mine husband, that ne'er from the curse he might free it, nor free it
From your vengeance! O may I behold him at last, even him and his bride,
Them, and these halls therewithal, all shattered in ruin, in ruin!—
Wretches, who dare unprovoked to do to Medea despite!
O father, O city, whom erst I forsook, for undoing, undoing,
And for shame, when the blood of my brother I spilt on the path of my flight!

NURSE

Do ye hear what she saith, and uplifteth her cry
Unto Themis and Zeus, to the Suppliant's King,
Oath-steward of men that be born but to die?

οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως ἔν τινι μικρῷ
δέσποινα χόλον καταπαύσει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς ἂν ἐς ὄψιν τὰν ἁμετέραν ἀντ.
ἔλθοι μύθων τ' αὐδαθέντων
δέξαιτ' ὀμφάν,
εἴ πως βαρύθυμον ὀργὰν
καὶ λῆμα φρενῶν μεθείη.
μήτοι τό γ' ἐμὸν πρόθυμον
φίλοισιν ἀπέστω.
ἀλλὰ βᾶσά νιν
δεῦρο πόρευσον οἴκων
ἔξω, φίλα καὶ τάδ' αὔδα·
σπεῦσον πρίν τι κακῶσαι τοὺς εἴσω·
πένθος γὰρ μεγάλως τόδ' ὁρμᾶται.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

δράσω τάδ'· ἀτὰρ φόβος εἰ πείσω
δέσποιναν ἐμήν·
μόχθου δὲ χάριν τήνδ' ἐπιδώσω.
καίτοι τοκάδος δέργμα λεαίνης
ἀποταυροῦται δμωσίν, ὅταν τις
μῦθον προφέρων πέλας ὁρμηθῇ.

σκαιοὺς δὲ λέγων κοὐδέν τι σοφοὺς
τοὺς πρόσθε βροτοὺς οὐκ ἂν ἁμάρτοις,
οἵτινες ὕμνους ἐπὶ μὲν θαλίαις
ἐπί τ' εἰλαπίναις καὶ παρὰ δείπνοις
ηὕροντο βίου τερπνὰς ἀκοάς·

O my lady will lay not her anger by
Soon, making her vengeance a little thing.

CHORUS

(*Ant.*)

If she would but come forth where we wait her,
If she would but give ear to the sound
Of our speech, that her spirit would learn
From its fierceness of anger to turn,
And her lust for revenge not burn!
O ne'er may my love prove traitor,
Never false to my friends be it found!

But go thou, and forth of the dwelling
Thy mistress hitherward lead:
Say to her that friends be we all.
O hasten, ere mischief befall
The lords of the palace-hall;
For her grief, like a tempest upswelling,
Resistless shall ruin-ward speed.

NURSE

I will do it: but almost my spirit despaireth
To win her: yet labour of love shall it be.
But my queen on her thralls as a mad bull glareth,
Or a lioness couched mid her whelps, whoso dareth
With speech to draw near her, so tameless is she.

He should err not, who named the old singers in singing
Not cunning, but left-handed bards, for their lays
Did they frame for the mirth-tide, the festal in-bringing
Of the wine, and the feast, when the harp-strings are ringing
To sweeten with melody life's sweet days.

στυγίους δὲ βροτῶν οὐδεὶς λύπας
ηὕρετο μούσῃ καὶ πολυχόρδοις
ᾠδαῖς παύειν, ἐξ ὧν θάνατοι
δειναί τε τύχαι σφάλλουσι δόμους.

καίτοι τάδε μὲν κέρδος ἀκεῖσθαι
μολπαῖσι βροτούς· ἵνα δ' εὔδειπνοι
δαῖτες, τί μάτην τείνουσι βοήν;
τὸ παρὸν γὰρ ἔχει τέρψιν ἀφ' αὑτοῦ
δαιτὸς πλήρωμα βροτοῖσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰαχὰν ἄιον πολύστονον γόων,
λιγυρὰ δ' ἄχεα μογερὰ βοᾷ
τὸν ἐν λέχει προδόταν κακόνυμφον·
θεοκλυτεῖ δ' ἄδικα παθοῦσα
τὰν Ζανὸς ὁρκίαν Θέμιν,
ἅ νιν ἔβασεν
Ἑλλάδ' ἐς ἀντίπορον
δι' ἅλα νύχιον ἐφ' ἁλμυρὰν
πόντου κλῇδ' ἀπέραντον.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

Κορίνθιαι γυναῖκες, ἐξῆλθον δόμων,
μή μοί τι μέμψησθ'· οἶδα γὰρ πολλοὺς βροτῶν
σεμνοὺς γεγῶτας, τοὺς μὲν ὀμμάτων ἄπο,
τοὺς δ' ἐν θυραίοις· οἱ δ' ἀφ' ἡσύχου ποδὸς
δύσκλειαν ἐκτήσαντο καὶ ῥᾳθυμίαν.
δίκη γὰρ οὐκ ἔνεστιν ὀφθαλμοῖς βροτῶν,
ὅστις πρὶν ἀνδρὸς σπλάγχνον ἐκμαθεῖν σαφῶς
στυγεῖ δεδορκώς, οὐδὲν ἠδικημένος.

But the dread doom of mortals, the anguish heart-
rending— [peace,
Never minstrel by music hath breathed on them
Nor by song with his harp-notes in harmony blending;
Albeit thereof cometh death's dark ending
Unto many a home that is wrecked by these.

And yet were it surely a boon to bring healing
Of sorrow to mortals with song; but in vain
Mid the fulness of feasting ring voices clear-pealing,
And the banquet itself hath a glamour, concealing
From mortals their doom, flinging spells over pain.
[*Exit* NURSE.

CHORUS

I have heard it, the sigh-laden cry of the daughter
Of Colchis, the woe-shrilling anguish of wailing
For the traitor to love who with false vows caught
her [assailing
Who in strength of her wrongs chideth Heaven,
The Oath-queen of Zeus, who with cords all-pre-
vailing [water,
Forth haled her, and brought her o'er star-litten
Where the brine-mists hover o'er Pontus' Key,
Unto Hellas far over the boundless sea.

Enter MEDEA.

MEDEA

Corinthian dames, I have come forth my doors
Lest ye condemn me. Many I know are held
Mis-proud—some, since they shrink from public gaze;
Some, from their bearing to their fellow-men;
Some quiet lives for indolence are defamed;
For justice dwells not in the eyes of man,
Who, ere he hath discerned his neighbour's heart,
Hates him at sight, albeit nowise wronged.

χρὴ δὲ ξένον μὲν κάρτα προσχωρεῖν πόλει·
οὐδ᾽ ἀστὸν ᾔνεσ᾽ ὅστις αὐθάδης γεγὼς
πικρὸς πολίταις ἐστὶν ἀμαθίας ὕπο.
ἐμοὶ δ᾽ ἄελπτον πρᾶγμα προσπεσὸν τόδε
ψυχὴν διέφθαρκ᾽· οἴχομαι δὲ καὶ βίου
χάριν μεθεῖσα κατθανεῖν χρῄζω, φίλαι.
ἐν ᾧ γὰρ ἦν μοι πάντα γιγνώσκειν καλῶς,
κάκιστος ἀνδρῶν ἐκβέβηχ᾽ οὑμὸς πόσις.
πάντων δ᾽ ὅσ᾽ ἔστ᾽ ἔμψυχα καὶ γνώμην ἔχει
γυναῖκές ἐσμεν ἀθλιώτατον φυτόν·
ἃς πρῶτα μὲν δεῖ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ
πόσιν πρίασθαι δεσπότην τε σώματος
λαβεῖν· κακοῦ γὰρ τοῦτό γ᾽ ἄλγιον κακόν·
κἀν τῷδ᾽ ἀγὼν μέγιστος, ἢ κακὸν λαβεῖν
ἢ χρηστόν. οὐ γὰρ εὐκλεεῖς ἀπαλλαγαὶ
γυναιξίν, οὐδ᾽ οἷόν τ᾽ ἀνήνασθαι πόσιν.
εἰς καινὰ δ᾽ ἤθη καὶ νόμους ἀφιγμένην
δεῖ μάντιν εἶναι, μὴ μαθοῦσαν οἴκοθεν,
ὅτῳ μάλιστα χρήσεται συνευνέτῃ.
κἂν μὲν τάδ᾽ ἡμῖν ἐκπονουμέναισιν εὖ
πόσις ξυνοικῇ μὴ βίᾳ φέρων ζυγόν,
ζηλωτὸς αἰών· εἰ δὲ μή, θανεῖν χρεών.
ἀνὴρ δ᾽, ὅταν τοῖς ἔνδον ἄχθηται ξυνών,
ἔξω μολὼν ἔπαυσε καρδίαν ἄσης,
ἢ πρὸς φίλον τιν᾽ ἢ πρὸς ἥλικα τραπείς·
ἡμῖν δ᾽ ἀνάγκη πρὸς μίαν ψυχὴν βλέπειν.
λέγουσι δ᾽ ἡμᾶς ὡς ἀκίνδυνον βίον
ζῶμεν κατ᾽ οἴκους, οἱ δὲ μάρνανται δορί·
κακῶς φρονοῦντες· ὡς τρὶς ἂν παρ᾽ ἀσπίδα
στῆναι θέλοιμ᾽ ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ τεκεῖν ἅπαξ.

A stranger must conform to the city's wont;
Nor citizens uncondemned may flout their fellows,
Like mannerless churls, a law unto themselves.

But me—the blow ye wot of suddenly fell
Soul-shattering. 'Tis my ruin: I have lost
All grace of life: I long to die, O friends.
He, to know whom well was mine all in all,
My lord, of all men basest hath become!
Surely, of creatures that have life and wit,
We women are of all unhappiest,
Who, first, must buy, as buys the highest bidder,
A husband—nay, we do but win for our lives
A master! Deeper depth of wrong is this.
Here too is dire risk—will the lord we gain
Be evil or good? Divorce?—'tis infamy
To us: we may not even reject a suitor![1]

Then, coming to new customs, habits new,
One need be a seer, to know the thing unlearnt
At home, what manner of man her mate shall be.
And *if* we learn our lesson, *if* our lord
Dwell with us, plunging not against the yoke,
Happy our lot is; else—no help but death.
For the man, when the home-yoke galls his neck,
Goes forth, to ease a weary sickened heart
By turning to some friend, some kindred soul:
We to one heart alone can look for comfort.

But we, say they, live an unperilled life
At home, while they do battle with the spear—
Unreasoning fools! Thrice would I under shield
Stand, rather than bear childbirth-peril once.

[1] A Greek girl's husband was chosen for her by her parents.

ἀλλ᾽ οὐ γὰρ αὑτὸς πρὸς σὲ κἄμ᾽ ἥκει λόγος·
σοὶ μὲν πόλις γὰρ ἔστι καὶ πατρὸς δόμοι
βίου τ᾽ ὄνησις καὶ φίλων συνουσία,
ἐγὼ δ᾽ ἔρημος ἄπολις οὖσ᾽ ὑβρίζομαι
πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἐκ γῆς βαρβάρου λελῃσμένη,
οὐ μητέρ᾽, οὐκ ἀδελφόν, οὐχὶ συγγενῆ
μεθορμίσασθαι τῆσδ᾽ ἔχουσα συμφορᾶς.
τοσοῦτον οὖν σου τυγχάνειν βουλήσομαι,
ἤν μοι πόρος τις μηχανή τ᾽ ἐξευρεθῇ
πόσιν δίκην τῶνδ᾽ ἀντιτίσασθαι κακῶν
[τὸν δόντα τ᾽ αὐτῷ θυγατέρ᾽ ἥ τ᾽ ἐγήματο],
σιγᾶν. γυνὴ γὰρ τἄλλα μὲν φόβου πλέα,
κακὴ δ᾽ ἐς ἀλκὴν καὶ σίδηρον εἰσορᾶν·
ὅταν δ᾽ ἐς εὐνὴν ἠδικημένη κυρῇ,
οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη φρὴν μιαιφονωτέρα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δράσω τάδ᾽· ἐνδίκως γὰρ ἐκτίσει πόσιν,
Μήδεια. πενθεῖν δ᾽ οὔ σε θαυμάζω τύχας.
ὁρῶ δὲ καὶ Κρέοντα τῆσδ᾽ ἄνακτα γῆς
στείχοντα, καινῶν ἄγγελον βουλευμάτων.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σὲ τὴν σκυθρωπὸν καὶ πόσει θυμουμένην,
Μήδειαν, εἶπον τῆσδε γῆς ἔξω περᾶν
φυγάδα, λαβοῦσαν δισσὰ σὺν σαυτῇ τέκνα,
καὶ μή τι μέλλειν· ὡς ἐγὼ βραβεὺς λόγου
τοῦδ᾽ εἰμί, κοὐκ ἄπειμι πρὸς δόμους πάλιν,
πρὶν ἄν σε γαίας τερμόνων ἔξω βάλω.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ· πανώλης ἡ τάλαιν᾽ ἀπόλλυμαι.
ἐχθροὶ γὰρ ἐξιᾶσι πάντα δὴ κάλων,
κοὐκ ἔστιν ἄτης εὐπρόσοιστος ἔκβασις.

But ah, thy story is not one with mine!
Thine is this city, thine a father's home,
Thine bliss of life and fellowship of friends;
But I, lone, cityless, and outraged thus
Of him who kidnapped me from foreign shores,
Mother nor brother have I, kinsman none,
For port of refuge from calamity.
Wherefore I fain would win of thee this boon:—
If any path be found me, or device,
Whereby to avenge these wrongs upon mine husband,
On her who weds, on him who gives the bride,
Keep silence. Woman quails at every peril,
Faint-heart to face the fray and look on steel;
But when in wedlock-rights she suffers wrong,
No spirit more bloodthirsty shall be found.

CHORUS

This will I; for 'tis just that thou, Medea,
Requite thy lord: no marvel thou dost grieve.
But I see Creon, ruler of this land,
Advancing, herald of some new decree.

Enter CREON.

CREON

Black-lowering woman, wroth against thy lord,
Medea, forth this land I bid thee fare
An exile, taking thy two sons with thee;
And make no tarrying: daysman of this cause
Am I, and homeward go I not again
Ere from the land's bounds I have cast thee forth.

MEDEA

Ah me! undone am I in utter ruin!
My foes crowd sail pursuing: landing-place
Is none from surges of calamity.

ἐρήσομαι δὲ καὶ κακῶς πάσχουσ᾽ ὅμως,
τίνος μ᾽ ἕκατι γῆς ἀποστέλλεις, Κρέον;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

δέδοικά σ᾽, οὐδὲν δεῖ παραμπέχειν λόγους,
μή μοί τι δράσῃς παῖδ᾽ ἀνήκεστον κακόν.
συμβάλλεται δὲ πολλὰ τοῦδε δείματος·
σοφὴ πέφυκας καὶ κακῶν πολλῶν ἴδρις,
λυπεῖ δὲ λέκτρων ἀνδρὸς ἐστερημένη.
κλύω δ᾽ ἀπειλεῖν σ᾽, ὡς ἀπαγγέλλουσί μοι,
τὸν δόντα καὶ γήμαντα καὶ γαμουμένην
δράσειν τι. ταῦτ᾽ οὖν πρὶν παθεῖν φυλάξομαι.
κρεῖσσον δέ μοι νῦν πρὸς σ᾽ ἀπεχθέσθαι, γύναι,
ἢ μαλθακισθένθ᾽ ὕστερον μεταστένειν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

φεῦ φεῦ·
οὐ νῦν με πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις, Κρέον,
ἔβλαψε δόξα μεγάλα τ᾽ εἴργασται κακά.
χρὴ δ᾽ οὔποθ᾽ ὅστις ἀρτίφρων πέφυκ᾽ ἀνὴρ
παῖδας περισσῶς ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι σοφούς·
χωρὶς γὰρ ἄλλης ἧς ἔχουσιν ἀργίας
φθόνον πρὸς ἀστῶν ἀλφάνουσι δυσμενῆ.
σκαιοῖσι μὲν γὰρ καινὰ προσφέρων σοφὰ
δόξεις ἀχρεῖος κοὐ σοφὸς πεφυκέναι·
τῶν δ᾽ αὖ δοκούντων εἰδέναι τι ποικίλον
κρείσσων νομισθεὶς λυπρὸς ἐν πόλει φανεῖ.
ἐγὼ δὲ καὐτὴ τῆσδε κοινωνῶ τύχης.
σοφὴ γὰρ οὖσα, τοῖς μέν εἰμ᾽ ἐπίφθονος,
τοῖς δ᾽ ἡσυχαία, τοῖς δὲ θατέρου τρόπου,
τοῖς δ᾽ αὖ προσάντης· εἰμὶ δ᾽ οὐκ ἄγαν σοφή.
σὺ δ᾽ αὖ φοβεῖ με· μή τι πλημμελὲς πάθῃς;
οὐχ ὧδ᾽ ἔχει μοι—μὴ τρέσῃς ἡμᾶς, Κρέον—
ὥστ᾽ εἰς τυράννους ἄνδρας ἐξαμαρτάνειν.

Yet, howso wronged, one question will I ask—
For what cause, Creon, dost thou banish me?

CREON

I fear thee—need is none to cloak my words—
Lest thou wreak cureless vengeance on my child.
And to this dread do many things conspire:
Wise art thou, cunning in much evil lore;
Chafed art thou, of thine husband's couch bereft:
I hear thou threatenest, so they bring me word,
To wreak on sire, on bridegroom, and on bride
Mischief. I guard mine head ere falls the blow.
Better be hated, woman, now of thee,
Than once relent, and sorely groan too late.

MEDEA

Not now first, Creon,—many a time ere now
Rumour hath wronged and wrought me grievous harm.
Ne'er should the man whose heart is sound of wit
Let teach his sons more wisdom than the herd.
They are burdened with unprofitable lore,
And spite and envy of other folk they earn.
For, if thou bring strange wisdom unto dullards,
Useless shalt thou be counted, and not wise:
And, if thy fame outshine those heretofore
Held wise, thou shalt be odious in men's eyes.
Myself too in this fortune am partaker.
Of some my wisdom wins me jealousy,
Some count me spiritless; outlandish some;
Unsocial some. Yet no deep lore is mine.
And thou, thou fear'st me, lest I work thee harm.
Not such am I—O Creon, dread not me—
That against princes I should dare transgress.

τί γὰρ σύ μ' ἠδίκηκας; ἐξέδου κόρην
ὅτῳ σε θυμὸς ἦγεν. ἀλλ' ἐμὸν πόσιν
μισῶ· σὺ δ', οἶμαι, σωφρονῶν ἔδρας τάδε.
καὶ νῦν τὸ μὲν σὸν οὐ φθονῶ καλῶς ἔχειν.
νυμφεύετ', εὖ πράσσοιτε· τήνδε δὲ χθόνα
ἐᾶτέ μ' οἰκεῖν· καὶ γὰρ ἠδικημένοι
σιγησόμεσθα, κρεισσόνων νικώμενοι.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λέγεις ἀκοῦσαι μαλθάκ', ἀλλ' εἴσω φρενῶν
ὀρρωδία μοι μή τι βουλεύῃς κακόν,
τόσῳ δέ γ' ἧσσον ἢ πάρος πέποιθά σοι·
γυνὴ γὰρ ὀξύθυμος, ὡς δ' αὔτως ἀνήρ,
ῥᾴων φυλάσσειν ἢ σιωπηλὸς σοφός.
ἀλλ' ἔξιθ' ὡς τάχιστα, μὴ λόγους λέγε·
ὡς ταῦτ' ἄραρε, κοὐκ ἔχεις τέχνην ὅπως
μενεῖς παρ' ἡμῖν οὖσα δυσμενὴς ἐμοί.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μή, πρός σε γονάτων τῆς τε νεογάμου κόρης.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόγους ἀναλοῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἂν πείσαις ποτέ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀλλ' ἐξελᾷς με κοὐδὲν αἰδέσει λιτάς;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

φιλῶ γὰρ οὐ σὲ μᾶλλον ἢ δόμους ἐμούς.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ πατρίς, ὥς σου κάρτα νῦν μνείαν ἔχω.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πλὴν γὰρ τέκνων ἔμοιγε φίλτατον πόλις.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

φεῦ φεῦ, βροτοῖς ἔρωτες ὡς κακὸν μέγα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὅπως ἄν, οἶμαι, καὶ παραστῶσιν τύχαι.

How hast thou wronged me? Thou hast given thy child
To whomso pleased thee. But—I hate mine husband;
So, doubtless, this in prudence hast thou done.
Nay, but I grudge not thy prosperity.
Wed ye, and prosper. But in this your land
Still let me dwell: for I, how wronged soe'er,
Will hold my peace, o'ermastered by the strong.

CREON

Soft words to hear!—but in thine inmost heart,
I fear, thou plottest mischief all the while;
And all the less I trust thee than before.
The vehement-hearted woman—yea, or man—
Is easier watched-for than the silent-cunning.
Nay, forth with all speed: plead me pleadings none;
For this is stablished: no device hast thou
To bide with us, who art a foe to me.

MEDEA (*clasping his feet*)

Nay,—by thy knees, and by the bride, thy child!

CREON

Thou wastest words; thou never shalt prevail.

MEDEA

Wilt drive me forth, respecting naught my prayers?

CREON

Ay: more I love not thee than mine own house.

MEDEA

My country! O, I call thee now to mind!

CREON

Ay, next my children, dear to me is Corinth.

MEDEA

Alas! to mortals what a curse is love!

CREON

Blessing or curse, I trow, as fortune falls.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

Ζεῦ, μὴ λάθοι σε τῶνδ' ὃς αἴτιος κακῶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἕρπ', ὦ ματαία, καί μ' ἀπάλλαξον πόνων.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πονοῦμεν ἡμεῖς κοὐ πόνων κεχρήμεθα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τάχ' ἐξ ὀπαδῶν χειρὸς ὠσθήσει βίᾳ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μὴ δῆτα τοῦτό γ', ἀλλά σ' αἰτοῦμαι, Κρέον—

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὄχλον παρέξεις, ὡς ἔοικας, ὦ γύναι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

φευξούμεθ'· οὐ τοῦθ' ἱκέτευσα σοῦ τυχεῖν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' αὖ βιάζει κοὐκ ἀπαλλάσσει χθονός;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μίαν με μεῖναι τήνδ' ἔασον ἡμέραν
καὶ ξυμπερᾶναι φροντίδ' ᾗ φευξούμεθα,
παισίν τ' ἀφορμὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἐπεὶ πατὴρ
οὐδὲν προτιμᾷ μηχανήσασθαι τέκνοις.
οἴκτειρε δ' αὐτούς· καὶ σύ τοι παίδων πατὴρ
πέφυκας· εἰκὸς δ' ἐστὶν εὔνοιάν σ' ἔχειν.
τοὐμοῦ γὰρ οὔ μοι φροντίς, εἰ φευξούμεθα,
κείνους δὲ κλαίω συμφορᾷ κεχρημένους.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἥκιστα τοὐμὸν λῆμ' ἔφυ τυραννικόν,
αἰδούμενος δὲ πολλὰ δὴ διέφθορα·
καὶ νῦν ὁρῶ μὲν ἐξαμαρτάνων, γύναι,
ὅμως δὲ τεύξει τοῦδε· προὐννέπω δέ σοι,
εἴ σ' ἡ 'πιοῦσα λαμπὰς ὄψεται θεοῦ
καὶ παῖδας ἐντὸς τῆσδε τερμόνων χθονός,

MEDEA

Zeus, Zeus, forget not him who is cause of this!

CREON

Hence, passionate fool, and rid me of my trouble.

MEDEA

Troubled am I; new troubles need I none.

CREON

Soon shalt thou be by servants' hands thrust out.

MEDEA

Nay—nay—not this, O Creon, I implore!

CREON

So, woman, thou, it seems, wilt make a coil.

MEDEA

I will flee forth:—not this the boon I crave.

CREON

Why restive then?—why rid not Corinth of thee?

MEDEA

Suffer me yet to tarry this one day,
And somewhat for our exile to take thought,
And find my babes a refuge, since their sire
Cares naught to make provision for his sons.
Compassionate these—a father too art thou
Of children—meet it is thou show them grace.
Not for myself I fret, if I be banished:
For them in their calamity I mourn.

CREON

My spirit least of all is tyrannous.
Many a plan have my relentings marred:
And, woman, now I know I err herein,
Yet shalt thou win this boon. But I forewarn thee,
If thee the approaching Sun-god's torch behold
Within this country's confines with thy sons,

θανεῖ. λέλεκται μῦθος ἀψευδὴς ὅδε.
νῦν δ', εἰ μένειν δεῖ, μίμν' ἐφ' ἡμέραν μίαν·
οὐ γάρ τι δράσεις δεινὸν ὧν φόβος μ' ἔχει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δύστανε γύναι,
φεῦ φεῦ, μελέα τῶν σῶν ἀχέων.
ποῖ ποτε τρέψει; τίνα προξενίαν
ἢ δόμον ἢ χθόνα σωτῆρα κακῶν
ἐξευρήσεις;
ὡς εἰς ἄπορόν σε κλύδωνα θεός,
Μήδεια, κακῶν ἐπόρευσε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

κακῶς πέπρακται πανταχῇ· τίς ἀντερεῖ;
ἀλλ' οὔτι ταύτῃ ταῦτα, μὴ δοκεῖτέ πω.
ἔτ' εἴσ' ἀγῶνες τοῖς νεωστὶ νυμφίοις,
καὶ τοῖσι κηδεύσασιν οὐ σμικροὶ πόνοι.
δοκεῖς γὰρ ἄν με τόνδε θωπεῦσαί ποτε,
εἰ μή τι κερδαίνουσαν ἢ τεχνωμένην;
οὐδ' ἂν προσεῖπον οὐδ' ἂν ἡψάμην χεροῖν.
ὁ δ' εἰς τοσοῦτον μωρίας ἀφίκετο,
ὥστ' ἐξὸν αὐτῷ τἄμ' ἑλεῖν βουλεύματα
γῆς ἐκβαλόντι, τήνδ' ἀφῆκεν ἡμέραν
μεῖναί μ', ἐν ᾗ τρεῖς τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν νεκροὺς
θήσω, πατέρα τε καὶ κόρην πόσιν τ' ἐμόν.
πολλὰς δ' ἔχουσα θανασίμους αὐτοῖς ὁδούς,
οὐκ οἶδ' ὁποίᾳ πρῶτον ἐγχειρῶ, φίλαι,
πότερον ὑφάψω δῶμα νυμφικὸν πυρί,
ἢ θηκτὸν ὤσω φάσγανον δι' ἥπατος,
σιγῇ δόμους εἰσβᾶσ' ἵν' ἔστρωται λέχος.

Thou diest:—the word is said that shall not lie.
Now, if remain thou must, remain one day—
Too short for thee to do the deeds I dread. [*Exit.*

CHORUS

O hapless thou!
Woe's me for thy misery, woe for the trouble and
anguish that meet thee!
Whitherward wilt thou turn thee?—what welcoming
hand mid the strangers shall greet thee?
What home or what land to receive thee, deliver-
ance from evils to give thee,
Wilt thou find for thee now?
How mid surge of despair to o'erwhelm thee in ruin
God's hand on thine helm
Hath steered, O Medea, thy prow!

MEDEA

Wronged—wronged by God and man! Who shall
gainsay?
But is it mere despair?—deem not so yet.
Bridegroom and bride grim wrestlings yet await;
Nor troubles light abide these marriage-makers.
Dost think that I had cringed to yon man ever,
Except to gain some gain, or work some wile?
Nor word nor touch of hand had I vouchsafed him!
But to such height of folly hath he come,
That, when he might forestall mine every plot
By banishment, this day of grace he grants me
To stay, wherein three foes will I lay dead,
The father, and the daughter, and mine husband.
And, having for them many paths of death,
Which first to take in hand I know not, friends—
To fire yon palace midst their marriage-feast,
Or to steal softly to their bridal-bower,
And through their two hearts thrust the whetted [knife.

ἀλλ' ἕν τί μοι πρόσαντες· εἰ ληφθήσομαι
δόμους ὑπερβαίνουσα καὶ τεχνωμένη,
θανοῦσα θήσω τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐχθροῖς γέλων.

κράτιστα τὴν εὐθεῖαν, ᾗ πεφύκαμεν
σοφαὶ μάλιστα, φαρμάκοις αὐτοὺς ἑλεῖν.
εἶεν·
καὶ δὴ τεθνᾶσι· τίς με δέξεται πόλις;
τίς γῆν ἄσυλον καὶ δόμους ἐχεγγύους
ξένος παρασχὼν ῥύσεται τοὐμὸν δέμας;
οὐκ ἔστι. μείνασ' οὖν ἔτι σμικρὸν χρόνον,
ἢν μέν τις ἡμῖν πύργος ἀσφαλὴς φανῇ,
δόλῳ μέτειμι τόνδε καὶ σιγῇ φόνον·
ἢν δ' ἐξελαύνῃ ξυμφορά μ' ἀμήχανος,
αὐτὴ ξίφος λαβοῦσα, κεἰ μέλλω θανεῖν,
κτενῶ σφε, τόλμης δ' εἶμι πρὸς τὸ καρτερόν.

οὐ γὰρ μὰ τὴν δέσποιναν ἣν ἐγὼ σέβω
μάλιστα πάντων καὶ ξυνεργὸν εἱλόμην,
Ἑκάτην μυχοῖς ναίουσαν ἑστίας ἐμῆς,
χαίρων τις αὐτῶν τοὐμὸν ἀλγυνεῖ κέαρ.
πικροὺς δ' ἐγώ σφιν καὶ λυγροὺς θήσω γάμους,
πικρὸν δὲ κῆδος καὶ φυγὰς ἐμὰς χθονός.

ἀλλ' εἶα· φείδου μηδὲν ὧν ἐπίστασαι,
Μήδεια, βουλεύουσα καὶ τεχνωμένη·
ἕρπ' εἰς τὸ δεινόν· νῦν ἀγὼν εὐψυχίας.
ὁρᾷς ἃ πάσχεις; οὐ γέλωτα δεῖ σ' ὀφλεῖν
τοῖς Σισυφείοις τοῖς τ' Ἰάσονος γάμοις,
γεγῶσαν ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς Ἡλίου τ' ἄπο.
ἐπίστασαι δέ· πρὸς δὲ καὶ πεφύκαμεν
γυναῖκες, εἰς μὲν ἔσθλ' ἀμηχανώταται,
κακῶν δὲ πάντων τέκτονες σοφώταται.

Yet one thing bars the way—if I be found
Crossing the threshold of the house and plotting,
Die shall I mid the mocking laughter of foes.

Best the sure path, wherein my nature's cunning
Excels, by poisons to destroy them—yea.
Now, grant them dead: what city will receive me,
What host vouchsafe a land of refuge, home
Secure, and from the avenger shield my life?
There is none. Tarrying then a little space,
If any tower of safety shall appear,
These deaths by guile and silence will I compass;
But if misfortune drive me desperate forth,
Myself will grip the sword,—yea, though I die,—
Aud slay, and dare the strong hand's reckless deed.

Ah, by the Queen of Night, whom I revere
Above all, and for fellow-worker chose,
Hecate, dweller by mine hearth's dark shrine,
None, none shall vex my soul, and rue it not.
Bitter and woeful bridal will I give them,
Bitter troth-plight and banishing of me.

Up then!—spare naught of all thy sorcery-lore,
Medea, of thy plotting and contriving;
On to the dread deed! Now is need of daring.
Look on thy wrongs: thou must not make derision
For sons of Sisyphus, for Jason's bride,—
Thou, sprung from royal father, from the Sun!
Thou know'st the means. I prove me woman indeed!
Men say we are most helpless for all good,
But of dark deeds most cunning fashioners.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαί, στρ. α′
καὶ δίκα καὶ πάντα πάλιν στρέφεται.
ἀνδράσι μὲν δόλιαι βουλαί, θεῶν δ'
οὐκέτι πίστις ἄραρε.
τὰν δ' ἐμὰν εὔκλειαν ἔχειν βιοτὰν
στρέψουσι φᾶμαι·
ἔρχεται τιμὰ γυναικείῳ γένει·
οὐκέτι δυσκέλαδος φάμα γυναῖκας ἕξει.

ἀντ. α′

μοῦσαι δὲ παλαιγενέων λήξουσ' ἀοιδᾶν
τὰν ἐμὰν ὑμνεῦσαι ἀπιστοσύναν.
οὐ γὰρ ἐν ἁμετέρᾳ γνώμᾳ λύρας
ὤπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδὰν
Φοῖβος, ἁγήτωρ μελέων· ἐπεὶ ἀντ-
άχησ' ἂν ὕμνον
ἀρσένων γέννᾳ· μακρὸς δ' αἰὼν ἔχει
πολλὰ μὲν ἁμετέραν ἀνδρῶν τε μοῖραν εἰπεῖν.

στρ. β′

σὺ δ' ἐκ μὲν οἴκων πατρίων ἔπλευσας
μαινομένᾳ κραδίᾳ, διδύμας ὁρίσασα πόντου
πέτρας· ἐπὶ δὲ ξένᾳ
ναίεις χθονί, τᾶς ἀνάνδρου
κοίτας ὀλέσασα λέκτρον,
τάλαινα, φυγὰς δὲ χώρας
ἄτιμος ἐλαύνει.

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1.)

Upward and back to their fountains the sacred rivers
are stealing; [confusion:
Justice is turned to injustice, the order of old to
The thoughts of the hearts of men are treachery
wholly, and, reeling [become a delusion.
From its ancient foundations, the faith of the Gods is
Everywhere change!—even me men's voices hence-
forth shall honour;
My life shall be sunlit with glory; for woman the
old-time story [be upon her.
Is ended, the slanders hoary no more shall as chains

(*Ant.* 1)

And the strains of the singers of old generations for
shame shall falter, [faithlessness ever.
Which sang evermore of the treason of woman, her
Alas, that our lips are not touched with the fire of
song from the altar
Of Phoebus, the Harper-king, of the inspiration-
giver! [ringing
Else had I lifted my voice in challenge of song high-
Unto men: for the roll of the ages shall find for
the poet-sages [their singing.
Proud woman-themes for their pages, heroines worthy

(*Str.* 2)

But thou from the ancient home didst sail over
leagues of foam, [sawest dispart,
On-sped by a frenzied heart, and the sea-gates
The Twin Rocks. Now, in the land
Of the stranger, thy doom is to waken
To a widowed couch, and forsaken
Of thy lord, and woe-overtaken,
To be cast forth shamed and banned.

βέβακε δ' ὅρκων χάρις, οὐδ' ἔτ' αἰδὼς   ἀντ. β'
Ἑλλάδι τᾷ μεγάλᾳ μένει, αἰθερία δ' ἀνέπτα.
σοὶ δ' οὔτε πατρὸς δόμοι,
δύστανε, μεθορμίσασθαι
μόχθων πάρα, σῶν τε λέκτρων
ἄλλα βασίλεια κρείσσων
δόμοισιν ἐπέστα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οὐ νῦν κατεῖδον πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις,
τραχεῖαν ὀργὴν ὡς ἀμήχανον κακόν.
σοὶ γὰρ παρὸν γᾶν τήνδε καὶ δόμους ἔχειν
κούφως φερούσῃ κρεισσόνων βουλεύματα,
λόγων ματαίων εἵνεκ' ἐκπεσεῖ χθονός.
κἀμοὶ μὲν οὐδὲν πρᾶγμα· μὴ παύσῃ ποτὲ
λέγουσ' Ἰάσων ὡς κάκιστός ἐστ' ἀνήρ·
ἃ δ' εἰς τυράννους ἐστί σοι λελεγμένα,
πᾶν κέρδος ἡγοῦ ζημιουμένη φυγῇ.
κἀγὼ μὲν ἀεὶ βασιλέων θυμουμένων
ὀργὰς ἀφῄρουν καί σ' ἐβουλόμην μένειν·
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνίεις μωρίας, λέγουσ' ἀεὶ
κακῶς τυράννους· τοιγὰρ ἐκπεσεῖ χθονός.
ὅμως δὲ κἀκ τῶνδ' οὐκ ἀπειρηκὼς φίλοις
ἥκω, τὸ σὸν δὲ προσκοπούμενος, γύναι,
ὡς μήτ' ἀχρήμων σὺν τέκνοισιν ἐκπέσῃς
μήτ' ἐνδεής του· πόλλ' ἐφέλκεται φυγὴ
κακὰ ξὺν αὑτῇ. καὶ γὰρ εἰ σύ με στυγεῖς,
οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην σοὶ κακῶς φρονεῖν ποτε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ παγκάκιστε, τοῦτο γάρ σ' εἰπεῖν ἔχω
γλώσσῃ μέγιστον εἰς ἀνανδρίαν κακόν,
ἦλθες πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἦλθες ἔχθιστος γεγώς

(*Ant.* 2)

Disannulled is the spell of the oath: no shame for
the broken troth [flight hath it ta'en.
In Hellas the wide doth remain, but heavenward its
No home of a father hast thou
For thine haven when trouble-storms lower.
Usurped is thy bridal bower
Of another, in pride of her power,
Ill-starred, overqueening thee now.

Enter JASON.

JASON

Not now first, nay, but ofttimes have I marked
What desperate mischief is a froward spirit.
Thou mightest stay in Corinth, in these halls,
Bearing unfractiously thy rulers' pleasure,
Yet for wild whirling words banished thou art.
Me they vex not—cease never, an thou wilt,
Clamouring, "Jason is of men most base!"
But, for thy railing on thy rulers, count it
All gain, that only exile punisheth thee.
For me—I have striven long to appease the wrath
Of kings incensed: fain would I thou shouldst stay.
But thou rein'st not thy folly, speaking still
Evil of dignities; art therefore banished.
Yet, for all this, not wearied of my friends,
With so much forethought come I for thee, lady,
That, banished with thy babes, thou lack not gold,
Nor aught beside; for exile brings with it
Hardships full many. Though thou hatest me,
Never can I bear malice against thee.

MEDEA

Caitiff of caitiffs!—blackest of reproaches
My tongue for thine unmanliness can frame—
Com'st thou to me—dost come, most hateful proved

[θεοῖς τε κἀμοὶ παντί τ' ἀνθρώπων γένει ;]
οὔτοι θράσος τόδ' ἐστὶν οὐδ' εὐτολμία,
φίλους κακῶς δράσαντ' ἐναντίον βλέπειν,
ἀλλ' ἡ μεγίστη τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις νόσων
πασῶν, ἀναίδει'· εὖ δ' ἐποίησας μολών,
ἐγώ τε γὰρ λέξασα κουφισθήσομαι
ψυχὴν κακῶς σε, καὶ σὺ λυπήσει κλύων.
ἐκ τῶν δὲ πρώτων πρῶτον ἄρξομαι λέγειν.
ἔσωσά σ', ὡς ἴσασιν Ἑλλήνων ὅσοι
ταὐτὸν συνεισέβησαν Ἀργῷον σκάφος,
πεμφθέντα ταύρων πυρπνόων ἐπιστάτην
ζεύγλαισι καὶ σπεροῦντα θανάσιμον γύην·
δράκοντά θ', ὃς πάγχρυσον ἀμπέχων δέρας
σπείραις ἔσῳζε πολυπλόκοις ἄυπνος ὤν,
κτείνασ' ἀνέσχον σοὶ φάος σωτήριον.
αὐτὴ δὲ πατέρα καὶ δόμους προδοῦσ' ἐμοὺς
τὴν Πηλιῶτιν εἰς Ἰωλκὸν ἱκόμην
σὺν σοί, πρόθυμος μᾶλλον ἢ σοφωτέρα·
Πελίαν τ' ἀπέκτειν', ὥσπερ ἄλγιστον θανεῖν,
παίδων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, πάντα δ' ἐξεῖλον δόμον.[1]
καὶ ταῦθ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν, ὦ κάκιστ' ἀνδρῶν, παθὼν
προὔδωκας ἡμᾶς, καινὰ δ' ἐκτήσω λέχη,
παίδων γεγώτων· εἰ γὰρ ἦσθ' ἄπαις ἔτι,
συγγνωστὸν ἦν σοι τοῦδ' ἐρασθῆναι λέχους.
ὅρκων δὲ φρούδη πίστις, οὐδ' ἔχω μαθεῖν
εἰ θεοὺς νομίζεις τοὺς τότ' οὐκ ἄρχειν ἔτι,
ἢ καινὰ κεῖσθαι θέσμι' ἀνθρώποις τὰ νῦν,
ἐπεὶ σύνοισθά γ' εἰς ἔμ' οὐκ εὔορκος ὤν.
φεῦ δεξιὰ χεὶρ ἧς σὺ πόλλ' ἐλαμβάνου,
καὶ τῶνδε γονάτων, ὡς μάτην κεχρώσμεθα

[1] Some MSS. have φόβον, "I cast out all thy (or their) fear."

To heaven, to me, to all the race of men?
This is not daring, no, nor courage this,
To wrong thy friends, and blench not from their eyes,
But, of all plagues infecting men, the worst,
Even shamelessness. And yet 'tis well thou cam'st,
For I shall ease the burden of mine heart
Reviling thee, and thou be galled to hear.
And with the first things first will I begin.
I saved thee: this knows every son of Greece
That stepped with thee aboard thine Argo's hull,
Thee, sent to quell the flame-outbreathing bulls
With yoke-bands, and to sow the tilth of death.
The dragon, warder of the Fleece of Gold,
That sleepless kept it with his manifold coils,
I slew, and raised deliverance-light for thee.
Myself forsook my father and mine home,
And to Iolcos under Pelion came
With thee, more zealous in thy cause than wise.
Pelias I slew by his own children's hands—
Of all deaths worst,—and dashed their house to ruin.
Thus dealt with, basest of all men, by me,
For a new bride hast thou forsaken me,
Though I had borne thee children! Wert thou childless,
Not past forgiving were this marriage-craving.
But faith of oaths hath vanished. I know not
Whether thou deem'st the olden Gods yet rule,
Or that new laws are now ordained for men;
For thine heart speaks thee unto me forsworn.
Out on this right hand, which thou oft wouldst clasp,—
These knees!—I was polluted by the touch

κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἐλπίδων δ' ἡμάρτομεν.
ἄγ', ὡς φίλῳ γὰρ ὄντι σοι κοινώσομαι,
δοκοῦσα μὲν τί πρός γε σοῦ πράξειν καλῶς;
ὅμως δ'· ἐρωτηθεὶς γὰρ αἰσχίων φανεῖ.
νῦν ποῖ τράπωμαι; πότερα πρὸς πατρὸς δόμους,
οὓς σοὶ προδοῦσα καὶ πάτραν ἀφικόμην;
ἢ πρὸς ταλαίνας Πελιάδας; καλῶς γ' ἂν οὖν
δέξαιντό μ' οἴκοις ὧν πατέρα κατέκτανον.
ἔχει γὰρ οὕτω· τοῖς μὲν οἴκοθεν φίλοις
ἐχθρὰ καθέστηχ', οὓς δέ μ' οὐκ ἐχρῆν κακῶς
δρᾶν, σοὶ χάριν φέρουσα πολεμίους ἔχω.
τοιγάρ με πολλαῖς μακαρίαν Ἑλληνίδων
ἔθηκας ἀντὶ τῶνδε· θαυμαστὸν δέ σε
ἔχω πόσιν καὶ πιστὸν ἡ τάλαιν' ἐγώ,
εἰ φεύξομαί γε γαῖαν ἐκβεβλημένη,
φίλων ἔρημος, σὺν τέκνοις μόνη μόνοις·
καλόν γ' ὄνειδος τῷ νεωστὶ νυμφίῳ,
πτωχοὺς ἀλᾶσθαι παῖδας ἥ τ' ἔσωσά σε.
ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δὴ χρυσοῦ μὲν ὃς κίβδηλος ᾖ
τεκμήρι' ἀνθρώποισιν ὤπασας σαφῆ,
ἀνδρῶν δ' ὅτῳ χρὴ τὸν κακὸν διειδέναι,
οὐδεὶς χαρακτὴρ ἐμπέφυκε σώματι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεινή τις ὀργὴ καὶ δυσίατος πέλει,
ὅταν φίλοι φίλοισι συμβάλωσ' ἔριν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

δεῖ μ', ὡς ἔοικε, μὴ κακὸν φῦναι λέγειν,
ἀλλ' ὥστε ναὸς κεδνὸν οἰακοστρόφον
ἄκροισι λαίφους κρασπέδοις ὑπεκδραμεῖν
τὴν σὴν στόμαργον, ὦ γύναι, γλωσσαλγίαν.
ἐγὼ δ', ἐπεὶ σὴν καὶ λίαν πυργοῖς χάριν,
Κύπριν νομίζω τῆς ἐμῆς ναυκληρίας

Of a base man, thus frustrate of mine hopes!
Come, as a friend will I commune with thee—
Yet what fair dealing should I hope from thee?—
Yet will I: questioned, baser shalt thou show.
Now, whither turn I?—to my father's house,
My land?—which I betrayed, to flee with thee!
To Pelias' hapless daughters? Graciously
Their father's slayer would they welcome home!
For thus it is—a foe am I become
To mine own house: no quarrel I had with those
With whom I have now a death-feud for thy sake.
For all this hast thou made me passing-blest
Midst Hellas' daughters! Oh, in thee have I—
O wretched I!—a wondrous spouse and leal,
Since from the land cast forth I pass to exile
Forlorn of friends, alone with children lone.
A proud reproach for our new bridegroom this—
"In poverty his babes, his saviour, wander!"
O Zeus, ah wherefore hast thou given to men
Plain signs for gold which is but counterfeit,
But no assay-mark nature-graven shows
On man's form, to discern the base withal?

CHORUS

Awful and past all healing is that wrath
When they that once loved clash in feud of hate.

JASON

Needs must I be not ill at speech, meseems,
But, like the careful helmsman of a ship,
With close-reefed canvas run before the gale,
Woman, of thy tempestuous-railing tongue.
I—for thy kindness tower-high thou pilest—
Deem Cypris saviour of my voyaging,

σώτειραν εἶναι θεῶν τε κἀνθρώπων μόνην.
σοὶ δ' ἔστι μὲν νοῦς λεπτός—ἀλλ' ἐπίφθονος
λόγος διελθεῖν, ὡς Ἔρως σ' ἠνάγκασε
τόξοις ἀφύκτοις τοὐμὸν ἐκσῶσαι δέμας.
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀκριβῶς αὐτὸ θήσομαι λίαν·
ὅπῃ γὰρ οὖν ὤνησας, οὐ κακῶς ἔχει.
μείζω γε μέντοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας
εἴληφας ἢ δέδωκας, ὡς ἐγὼ φράσω.
πρῶτον μὲν Ἑλλάδ' ἀντὶ βαρβάρου χθονὸς
γαῖαν κατοικεῖς καὶ δίκην ἐπίστασαι
νόμοις τε χρῆσθαι μὴ πρὸς ἰσχύος χάριν·
πάντες δέ σ' ᾔσθοντ' οὖσαν Ἕλληνες σοφήν,
καὶ δόξαν ἔσχες· εἰ δὲ γῆς ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις
ὅροισιν ᾤκεις, οὐκ ἂν ἦν λόγος σέθεν.
εἴη δ' ἔμοιγε μήτε χρυσὸς ἐν δόμοις
μήτ' Ὀρφέως κάλλιον ὑμνῆσαι μέλος,
εἰ μὴ 'πίσημος ἡ τύχη γένοιτό μοι.
τοσαῦτα μέν σοι τῶν ἐμῶν πόνων πέρι
ἔλεξ'· ἅμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προὔθηκας λόγων.
ἃ δ' εἰς γάμους μοι βασιλικοὺς ὠνείδισας,
ἐν τῷδε δείξω πρῶτα μὲν σοφὸς γεγώς,
ἔπειτα σώφρων, εἶτα σοὶ μέγας φίλος
καὶ παισὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖσιν· ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἥσυχος.
ἐπεὶ μετέστην δεῦρ' Ἰωλκίας χθονὸς
πολλὰς ἐφέλκων συμφορὰς ἀμηχάνους,
τί τοῦδ' ἂν εὕρημ' ηὗρον εὐτυχέστερον
ἢ παῖδα γῆμαι βασιλέως φυγὰς γεγώς;
οὐχ, ᾗ σὺ κνίζει, σὸν μὲν ἐχθαίρων λέχος,
καινῆς δὲ νύμφης ἱμέρῳ πεπληγμένος,
οὐδ' εἰς ἅμιλλαν πολύτεκνον σπουδὴν ἔχων·
ἅλις γὰρ οἱ γεγῶτες οὐδὲ μέμφομαι·
ἀλλ' ὡς, τὸ μὲν μέγιστον, οἰκοῖμεν καλῶς

Her, and none other or of Gods or men.
Thou art subtle of wit—nay, but ungenerous
It were to tell how Love, by strong compulsion
Of shafts unerring, made thee save my life.
Yet take I not account too strict thereof;
For, in that thou didst save me, thou didst well.
Howbeit, more hast thou received than given
From my deliverance, as my words shall prove:—
First, then, in Hellas dwell'st thou, in the stead
Of land barbaric, knowest justice, learnest
To live by law without respect of force;
And all the Greeks have heard thy wisdom's fame.
Renown is thine; but if on earth's far bourn
Thou dwelledst yet, thou hadst not lived in story.
Now mine be neither gold mine halls within,
Nor sweeter song be mine than Orpheus sang,
If my fair fortune be to fame unknown.

Thus far of my great labours have I spoken,—
This challenge to debate didst thou fling down:—
But, for thy railings on my royal marriage,
Herein will I show, first, that wise I was;
Then, temperate; third, to thee the best of friends
And to my children—nay, but hear me out.

When I came hither from Iolcos-land
With many a desperate fortune in my train,
What happier treasure-trove could I have found
Than to wed—I, an exile—with a princess?
Not—where it galls thee—loathing couch of thine,
And for a new bride smitten with desire,
Nor eager I to multiply mine offspring:—
Suffice these born to me: no fault in them:
But that—this chiefly—we might live in honour,

καὶ μὴ σπανιζοίμεσθα, γιγνώσκων ὅτι
πένητα φεύγει πᾶς τις ἐκποδὼν φίλος,
παῖδας δὲ θρέψαιμ' ἀξίως δόμων ἐμῶν,
σπείρας τ' ἀδελφοὺς τοῖσιν ἐκ σέθεν τέκνοις,
εἰς ταὐτὸ θείην, καὶ ξυναρτήσας γένος,
εὐδαιμονοίην. σοί τε γὰρ παίδων τί δεῖ,
ἐμοί τε λύει τοῖσι μέλλουσιν τέκνοις
τὰ ζῶντ' ὀνῆσαι. μῶν βεβούλευμαι κακῶς;
οὐδ' ἂν σὺ φαίης, εἴ σε μὴ κνίζοι λέχος.

ἀλλ' εἰς τοσοῦτον ἥκεθ' ὥστ' ὀρθουμένης
εὐνῆς γυναῖκες πάντ' ἔχειν νομίζετε,
ἢν δ' αὖ γένηται ξυμφορά τις εἰς λέχος,
τὰ λῷστα καὶ κάλλιστα πολεμιώτατα
τίθεσθε. χρῆν ἄρ' ἄλλοθέν ποθεν βροτοὺς
παῖδας τεκνοῦσθαι, θῆλυ δ' οὐκ εἶναι γένος·
χοὔτως ἂν οὐκ ἦν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις κακόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἰᾶσον, εὖ μὲν τούσδ' ἐκόσμησας λόγους·
ὅμως δ' ἔμοιγε, κεἰ παρὰ γνώμην ἐρῶ,
δοκεῖς προδοὺς σὴν ἄλοχον οὐ δίκαια δρᾶν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἦ πολλὰ πολλοῖς εἰμι διάφορος βροτῶν.
ἐμοὶ γὰρ ὅστις ἄδικος ὢν σοφὸς λέγειν
πέφυκε, πλείστην ζημίαν ὀφλισκάνει·
γλώσσῃ γὰρ αὐχῶν τἄδικ' εὖ περιστελεῖν,
τολμᾷ πανουργεῖν· ἔστι δ' οὐκ ἄγαν σοφός.

ὡς καὶ σὺ μή νυν εἰς ἔμ' εὐσχήμων γένῃ
λέγειν τε δεινός· ἓν γὰρ ἐκτενεῖ σ' ἔπος.
χρῆν σ', εἴπερ ἦσθα μὴ κακός, πείσαντά με
γαμεῖν γάμον τόνδ', ἀλλὰ μὴ σιγῇ φίλων.

And be not straitened,—for I know full well
How all friends from the poor man stand aloof,—
And I might nurture as beseems mine house
Our sons, and to these born of thee beget
Brethren, and, knitting in one family all,
Live happy days. Thou, what wouldst thou of
children?
But me it profits, through sons to be born
To help the living. Have I planned so ill?
Not thou wouldst say it, save for jealousy's sting.

But ye—ye women—so unreasoning are
That, wedlock-rights untrespassed-on, all's well;
But, if once your sole tenure be infringed,
With the best, fairest lot are ye at feud
Most bitter. Would that mortals otherwise
Could get them babes, that womankind were not,
And so no curse had lighted upon men.

CHORUS

Words, Jason, words, tricked out full cunningly!
Yet to me—though I speak not to thy mind—
Unjust thou seem'st, betraying thus thy wife.

MEDEA

Not as the world thinks think I oftentimes;
Nay, to my thought, a villain's artful tongue
Doubles the hurt his villainy doth to him:
So sure his tongue can gloze the wrong, he grows
Reckless in sin—a mere fool's wisdom this.

Then be not thou, as touching me, fair-seeming
And crafty-tongued: one word shall overthrow thee:
Thou shouldst, wert thou not base, have wed this
bride
With my consent, not hid it from thy friends.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

καλῶς γ' ἄν, οἶμαι, τῷδ' ὑπηρέτεις λόγῳ,
εἴ σοι γάμον κατεῖπον, ἥτις οὐδὲ νῦν
τολμᾷς μεθεῖναι καρδίας μέγαν χόλον·

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐ τοῦτό σ' εἶχεν, ἀλλὰ βάρβαρον λέχος
πρὸς γῆρας οὐκ εὔδοξον ἐξέβαινέ σοι.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

εὖ νυν τόδ' ἴσθι, μὴ γυναικὸς εἵνεκα
γῆμαί με λέκτρα βασιλέων ἃ νῦν ἔχω,
ἀλλ', ὥσπερ εἶπον καὶ πάρος, σῶσαι θέλων
σέ, καὶ τέκνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὁμοσπόρους
φῦσαι τυράννους παῖδας, ἔρυμα δώμασι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μή μοι γένοιτο λυπρὸς εὐδαίμων βίος
μηδ' ὄλβος ὅστις τὴν ἐμὴν κνίζοι φρένα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οἶσθ' ὡς μετεύξει καὶ σοφωτέρα φανεῖ;
τὰ χρηστὰ μή σοι λυπρὰ φαινέσθω ποτε,
μηδ' εὐτυχοῦσα δυστυχὴς εἶναι δόκει.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὕβριζ', ἐπειδὴ σοὶ μὲν ἔστ' ἀποστροφή,
ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος τήνδε φευξοῦμαι χθόνα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

αὐτὴ τάδ' εἵλου· μηδέν' ἄλλον αἰτιῶ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δρῶσα; μῶν γαμοῦσα καὶ προδοῦσά σε;

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἀρὰς τυράννοις ἀνοσίους ἀρωμένη.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

καὶ σοῖς ἀραία γ' οὖσα τυγχάνω δόμοις.

JASON

Ay, this my purpose nobly hadst thou helped,
Had I a marriage named, who even now
Canst not refrain thy heart's exceeding wrath!

MEDEA

Not this thine hindrance, but the alien wife
No crown of honour was as eld drew on.

JASON

Now know this well—not for the woman's sake
I wed the royal bride whom I have won,
But, as I said, of my desire to save
Thee, and beget seed royal, to my sons
Brethren, and for mine house a tower of strength.

MEDEA

No prosperous life 'neath sorrow's cloud for me,
Nor weal, with thorns aye rankling in mine heart!

JASON

Know'st how to change thy prayer, and wiser show?
May thy good never seem to thee thy grief;
Nor in fair fortune deem thy lot misfortune.

MEDEA

O yea, insult! Thou hast a refuge, thou;
But desolate I am banished from this land.

JASON

Thyself hast chosen this: blame none beside.

MEDEA

I?—sooth, by wedding and betraying thee!

JASON

By cursing princes with an impious curse.

MEDEA

Ay—and to *thine* house hast thou found me a curse!

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ὡς οὐ κρινοῦμαι τῶνδέ σοι τὰ πλείονα.
ἀλλ' εἴ τι βούλει παισὶν ἢ σαυτῆς φυγῇ
προσωφέλημα χρημάτων ἐμῶν λαβεῖν,
λέγ'· ὡς ἕτοιμος ἀφθόνῳ δοῦναι χερὶ
ξένοις τε πέμπειν σύμβολ', οἳ δράσουσί σ' εὖ.
καὶ ταῦτα μὴ θέλουσα μωρανεῖς, γύναι·
λήξασα δ' ὀργῆς κερδανεῖς ἀμείνονα.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὔτ' ἂν ξένοισι τοῖσι σοῖς χρησαίμεθ' ἄν,
οὔτ' ἄν τι δεξαίμεσθα, μήθ' ἡμῖν δίδου·
κακοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δῶρ' ὄνησιν οὐκ ἔχει.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἀλλ' οὖν ἐγὼ μὲν δαίμονας μαρτύρομαι,
ὡς πάνθ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τε καὶ τέκνοις θέλω·
σοὶ δ' οὐκ ἀρέσκει τἀγάθ', ἀλλ' αὐθαδίᾳ
φίλους ἀπωθεῖ· τοιγὰρ ἀλγυνεῖ πλέον·

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

χώρει· πόθῳ γὰρ τῆς νεοδμήτου κόρης
αἱρεῖ χρονίζων δωμάτων ἐξώπιος·
νύμφευ'· ἴσως γάρ, σὺν θεῷ δ' εἰρήσεται,
γαμεῖς τοιοῦτον ὥστε σ' ἀρνεῖσθαι γάμον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔρωτες ὑπὲρ μὲν ἄγαν στρ. α'
ἐλθόντες οὐκ εὐδοξίαν
οὐδ' ἀρετὰν παρέδωκαν
ἀνδράσιν· εἰ δ' ἅλις ἔλθοι
Κύπρις, οὐκ ἄλλα θεὸς εὔχαρις οὕτως.
μήποτ', ὦ δέσποιν', ἐπ' ἐμοὶ
χρυσέων τόξων ἐφείης
ἱμέρῳ χρίσασ' ἄφυκτον οἰστόν.

JASON

With thee no more I wrangle touching this.
But if, or for the children or thyself,
For help in exile thou wilt take my gold,
Speak : ready am I to give with hand ungrudging,
And send guest-tokens which shall find thee friends.
If this thou wilt not, foolish shalt thou be :
Refrain wrath, and advantaged shalt thou be.

MEDEA

Thy friends!—nothing will I of friends of thine.
No whit will I receive, nor offer thou.
No profit is there in a villain's gifts.

JASON

In any wise I call the Gods to witness
That all help would I give thee and thy sons ;
But thy good likes thee not : thy stubborn pride
Spurns friends : the more thy grief shall therefore be.
[*Exit.*

MEDEA

Away!—impatience for the bride new-trapped
Consumes thee loitering from her bower afar!
Wed : for perchance—and God shall speed the
word—
Thine shall be bridal thou wouldst fain renounce.

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

Love bringeth nor honour nor profit to men when it
cometh restraining [raining
Not its unscanted excess : but if Cypris, in measure
Her joy, cometh down, there is none other
Goddess so winsome as she.
Not upon me, O Queen, do thou aim from thy bow
all-golden [—not on me!
The arrow desire-envenomed that none may avoid

στέγοι[1] *δέ με σωφροσύνα,* ἀντ. α'
δώρημα κάλλιστον θεῶν·
μηδέ ποτ' ἀμφιλόγους ὀρ-
γὰς ἀκόρεστά τε νείκη
θυμὸν ἐκπλήξασ' ἑτέροις ἐπὶ λέκτροις
προσβάλοι δεινὰ Κύπρις, ἀ-
πτολέμους δ' εὐνὰς σεβίζουσ'
ὀξύφρων κρίνοι λέχη γυναικῶν.

ὦ πατρίς, ὦ δώματα, μὴ στρ. β'
δῆτ' ἄπολις γενοίμαν
τὸν ἀμηχανίας ἔχουσα
δυσπέρατον αἰῶν',
οἰκτροτάτων ἀχέων.
θανάτῳ θανάτῳ πάρος δαμείην
ἁμέραν τάνδ' ἐξανύσασα· μό-
χθων δ' οὐκ ἄλλος ὕπερθεν ἢ
γᾶς πατρίας στέρεσθαι.

εἴδομεν, οὐκ ἐξ ἑτέρων ἀντ. β'
μῦθον ἔχω φράσασθαι·
σὲ γὰρ οὐ πόλις, οὐ φίλων τις
ᾤκτισεν παθοῦσαν
δεινότατον παθέων.
ἀχάριστος ὄλοιθ' ὅτῳ πάρεστι
μὴ φίλους τιμᾶν καθαρὰν ἀνοί-
ξαντα κλῇδα φρενῶν· ἐμοὶ
μὲν φίλος οὔποτ' ἔσται.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

Μήδεια, *χαῖρε· τοῦδε γὰρ προοίμιον*
κάλλιον οὐδεὶς οἶδε προσφωνεῖν φίλους.

[1] Wecklein: for MSS. *στέργοι*, "befriend me."

(*Ant.* 1)

But let Temperance shield me, the fairest of gifts of
the Gods ever-living: [unforgiving,
Nor ever with passion of jarring contention, nor feuds
In her terrors may Love's Queen visit me, smiting
with maddened unrest
For a couch mismated my soul; but the peace of the
bride-bed be holden [bonds that be best.
In honour of her, and her keen eyes choose for us

(*Str.* 2)

O fatherland, O mine home,
Not mine be the exile's doom!
Into poverty's pathways hard to be trod may my feet
not be guided!
Most piteous anguish were this.
By death—O by death ere then may the conflict of
life be decided, [land divided—
Ended be life's little day! To be thus from the home-
No pang more bitter there is.

(*Ant.* 2)

We have seen, and it needeth naught
That of others herein we be taught:
For thee not a city, for thee not a friend hath
compassionated
When affliction most awful is thine.
But he, who regardeth not friends, accursed may he
perish, and hated, [hapless-fated—
Who opes not his heart with sincerity's key to the
Never such shall be friend of mine.

Enter AEGEUS.

AEGEUS

Medea, joy to thee!—for fairer greeting
None knoweth to accost his friends withal.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σύ, παῖ σοφοῦ Πανδίονος,
Αἰγεῦ. πόθεν γῆς τῆσδ' ἐπιστρωφᾷ πέδον;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

Φοίβου παλαιὸν ἐκλιπὼν χρηστήριον.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δ' ὀμφαλὸν γῆς θεσπιῳδὸν ἐστάλης;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

παίδων ἐρευνῶν σπέρμ' ὅπως γένοιτό μοι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πρὸς θεῶν, ἄπαις γὰρ δεῦρ' ἀεὶ τείνεις βίον;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ἄπαιδές ἐσμεν δαίμονός τινος τύχῃ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

δάμαρτος οὔσης, ἢ λέχους ἄπειρος ὤν;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἐσμὲν εὐνῆς ἄζυγες γαμηλίου.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δῆτα Φοῖβος εἶπέ σοι παίδων πέρι;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

σοφώτερ' ἢ κατ' ἄνδρα συμβαλεῖν ἔπη.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

θέμις μὲν ἡμᾶς χρησμὸν εἰδέναι θεοῦ;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

μάλιστ', ἐπεί τοι καὶ σοφῆς δεῖται φρενός.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δῆτ' ἔχρησε; λέξον, εἰ θέμις κλύειν.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ἀσκοῦ με τὸν προύχοντα μὴ λῦσαι πόδα,

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πρὶν ἂν τί δράσῃς ἢ τίν' ἐξίκῃ χθόνα;

MEDEA

Joy to thee also, wise Pandion's son,
Aegeus. Whence art thou journeying through this land?

AEGEUS

Leaving the ancient oracle of Phoebus.

MEDEA

Why didst thou fare to earth's prophetic navel?

AEGEUS

To ask how seed of children might be mine.

MEDEA

'Fore Heaven!—aye childless is thy life till now?

AEGEUS

Childless I am, by chance of some God's will.

MEDEA

This, with a wife, or knowing not the couch?

AEGEUS

Nay, not unyoked to wedlock's bed am I.

MEDEA

Now what to thee spake Phoebus touching issue?

AEGEUS

Deep words of wisdom not for man to interpret.

MEDEA

Without sin might I know the God's reply?

AEGEUS

O yea—good sooth, it asks a wise wit most.

MEDEA

What said he? Say, if sin be not to hear.

AEGEUS

"Loose not the wine-skin's forward-jutting foot"—

MEDEA

Till thou shouldst do what thing, or reach what land?

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ
πρὶν ἂν πατρῴαν αὖθις ἑστίαν μόλω.
ΜΗΔΕΙΑ
σὺ δ' ὡς τί χρῄζων τήνδε ναυστολεῖς χθόνα ;
ΑΙΓΕΥΣ
Πιτθεύς τις ἔστι γῆς ἄναξ Τροιζηνίας.
ΜΗΔΕΙΑ
παῖς, ὡς λέγουσι, Πέλοπος εὐσεβέστατος.
ΑΙΓΕΥΣ
τούτῳ θεοῦ μάντευμα κοινῶσαι θέλω.
ΜΗΔΕΙΑ
σοφὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ καὶ τρίβων τὰ τοιάδε.
ΑΙΓΕΥΣ
κἀμοί γε πάντων φίλτατος δορυξένων.
ΜΗΔΕΙΑ
ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης καὶ τύχοις ὅσων ἐρᾷς.
ΑΙΓΕΥΣ
τί γὰρ σὸν ὄμμα χρώς τε συντέτηχ' ὅδε ;
ΜΗΔΕΙΑ
Αἰγεῦ, κάκιστος ἔστι μοι πάντων πόσις.
ΑΙΓΕΥΣ
τί φής ; σαφῶς μοι σὰς φράσον δυσθυμίας.
ΜΗΔΕΙΑ
ἀδικεῖ μ' Ἰάσων οὐδὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ παθών.
ΑΙΓΕΥΣ
τί χρῆμα δράσας ; φράζε μοι σαφέστερον.
ΜΗΔΕΙΑ
γυναῖκ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν δεσπότιν δόμων ἔχει.
ΑΙΓΕΥΣ
ἦ που τετόλμηκ' ἔργον αἴσχιστον τόδε ;
ΜΗΔΕΙΑ
σάφ' ἴσθ'· ἄτιμοι δ' ἐσμὲν οἱ πρὸ τοῦ φίλοι.

AEGEUS

"Till to the hearth ancestral back thou come."

MEDEA

And thou, what wouldst thou sailing to this shore?

AEGEUS

There is one Pittheus, king of Troezen he,—

MEDEA

A man most pious, Pelops' son, they say.

AEGEUS

To him the God's response I fain would tell.

MEDEA

Yea—a wise man, who hath much skill therein.

AEGEUS

Yea, and my best-belovèd spear-ally.

MEDEA

Now prosper thou, and win thine heart's desire.

AEGEUS

Why droops thine eye?—why this wan-wasted hue?

MEDEA

Aegeus, of all men basest is mine husband.

AEGEUS

What say'st thou? Clearly tell me thine heart's pain.

MEDEA

He wrongs me—Jason, never wronged of me.

AEGEUS

What hath he done? More plainly tell it out.

MEDEA

Another wife he takes, his household's queen.

AEGEUS

Ha! hath he dared in truth this basest deed?

MEDEA

Yea: I am now dishonoured, once beloved.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

πότερον ἐρασθείς, ἢ σὸν ἐχθαίρων λέχος ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μέγαν γ᾽ ἔρωτα· πιστὸς οὐκ ἔφυ φίλοις.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ἴτω νυν, εἴπερ ὡς λέγεις ἐστὶν κακός.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀνδρῶν τυράννων κῆδος ἠράσθη λαβεῖν.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

δίδωσι δ᾽ αὐτῷ τίς ; πέραινέ μοι λόγον.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

Κρέων, ὃς ἄρχει τῆσδε γῆς Κορινθίας.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

συγγνωστὰ μὲν τἄρ᾽ ἦν σε λυπεῖσθαι, γύναι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὄλωλα· καὶ πρός γ᾽ ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

πρὸς τοῦ ; τόδ᾽ ἄλλο καινὸν αὖ λέγεις κακόν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

Κρέων μ᾽ ἐλαύνει φυγάδα γῆς Κορινθίας.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ἐᾷ δ᾽ Ἰάσων ; οὐδὲ ταῦτ᾽ ἐπῄνεσα.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

λόγῳ μὲν οὐχί, καρτερεῖν δὲ βούλεται.
ἀλλ᾽ ἄντομαί σε τῆσδε πρὸς γενειάδος
γονάτων τε τῶν σῶν ἱκεσία τε γίγνομαι,
οἴκτειρον οἴκτειρόν με τὴν δυσδαίμονα,
καὶ μή μ᾽ ἔρημον ἐκπεσοῦσαν εἰσίδῃς,
δέξαι δὲ χώρᾳ καὶ δόμοις ἐφέστιον.
οὕτως ἔρως σοὶ πρὸς θεῶν τελεσφόρος
γένοιτο παίδων, καὐτὸς ὄλβιος θάνοις.

AEGEUS

Another love was this?—or hate of thee?

MEDEA

Love?—deep and high his love is!—traitor in love!

AEGEUS

Away with him, if he be base as this!

MEDEA

His love was for affinity with princes.

AEGEUS

Who giveth him his daughter? Tell me all.

MEDEA

Creon, who ruleth this Corinthian land.

AEGEUS

Sooth, lady, reason was that thou shouldst grieve.

MEDEA

'Tis death to me! Yea, also am I banished.

AEGEUS

Of whom? A monstrous wrong thou namest now!

MEDEA

Creon from Corinth driveth me an exile.

AEGEUS

Doth Jason suffer this?—I count it shame!

MEDEA

In pretence, no—yet O, he bears it well!
But I beseech thee, lo, thy beard I touch,—
I clasp thy knees, thy suppliant am I now:—
Pity, O pity me the evil-starred,
And see me not cast forth to homelessness:
Receive to a hearth-place in thy land, thine halls.
So by heaven's blessing fruitful be thy love
In children, and in death thyself be blest.

εὕρημα δ' οὐκ οἶσθ' οἷον ηὕρηκας τόδε·
παύσω δέ σ' ὄντ' ἄπαιδα καὶ παίδων γονὰς
σπεῖραί σε θήσω· τοιάδ' οἶδα φάρμακα.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

πολλῶν ἕκατι τήνδε σοι δοῦναι χάριν,
γύναι, πρόθυμός εἰμι, πρῶτα μὲν θεῶν,
ἔπειτα παίδων ὧν ἐπαγγέλλει γονάς·
εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ δὴ φροῦδός εἰμι πᾶς ἐγώ.
[οὕτω δ' ἔχει μοι· σοῦ μὲν ἐλθούσης χθόνα,
πειράσομαί σου προξενεῖν δίκαιος ὤν.]
τόσον γε μέντοι σοι προσημαίνω, γύναι·
ἐκ τῆσδε μὲν γῆς οὔ σ' ἄγειν βουλήσομαι·
αὐτὴ δ' ἐάνπερ εἰς ἐμοὺς ἔλθῃς δόμους,
μενεῖς ἄσυλος κοὔ σε μὴ μεθῶ τινι.
ἐκ τῆσδε δ' αὐτὴ γῆς ἀπαλλάσσου πόδα·
ἀναίτιος γὰρ καὶ ξένοις εἶναι θέλω.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἔσται τάδ'· ἀλλὰ πίστις εἰ γένοιτό μοι
τούτων, ἔχοιμ' ἂν πάντα πρὸς σέθεν καλῶς.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

μῶν οὐ πέποιθας; ἢ τί σοι τὸ δυσχερές;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πέποιθα· Πελίου δ' ἐχθρός ἐστί μοι δόμος
Κρέων τε· τούτοις δ', ὁρκίοισι μὲν ζυγείς,
ἄγουσιν οὐ μεθεῖ' ἂν ἐκ γαίας ἐμέ·
λόγοις δὲ συμβάς, καὶ θεῶν ἀνώμοτος,
φίλος γένοι' ἂν κἀπικηρυκεύμασι
τάχ'[1] ἂν πίθοιο· τἀμὰ μὲν γὰρ ἀσθενῆ,
τοῖς δ' ὄλβος ἔστι καὶ δόμος τυραννικός.

[1] Wyttenbach: for MSS. οὐκ.

Thou know'st not what good fortune thou hast found;
For I will end thy childlessness, will cause
Thy seed to grow to sons; such charms I know.

AEGEUS

For many causes am I minded, lady,
This grace to grant thee: for the Gods' sake first;
Then, for thy promise of a seed of sons;
For herein Aegeus' name is like to die.
But thus it is—if to my land thou come,
I will protect thee all I can: my right
Is this; but I forewarn thee of one thing—
Not from this land to lead thee I consent;
But, if thou reachest of thyself mine halls,
Safe shalt thou bide; to none will I yield thee.
But from this land thou must thyself escape;
For even to strangers blameless will I be.

MEDEA

So be it. Yet, were oath-pledge given for this
To me, then had I all I would of thee.

AEGEUS

Ha, dost not trust me?—or at what dost stumble?

MEDEA

I trust thee; but my foes are Pelias' house
And Creon. Oath-bound, thou couldst never yield me
To these, when they would drag me from the land.
Hadst thou but promised, to the Gods unpledged,
Thou mightest turn their friend, might'st lightly yield
To herald-summons. Strengthless is my cause:
Wealth is on their side, and a princely house.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

πολλὴν ἔλεξας ἐν λόγοις προμηθίαν·
ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι, δρᾶν τάδ' οὐκ ἀφίσταμαι.
ἐμοί τε γὰρ τάδ' ἐστὶν ἀσφαλέστατα,
σκῆψίν τιν' ἐχθροῖς σοῖς ἔχοντα δεικνύναι,
τὸ σόν τ' ἄραρε μᾶλλον· ἐξηγοῦ θεούς.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὄμνυ πέδον Γῆς πατέρα θ' Ἥλιον πατρὸς
τοὐμοῦ, θεῶν τε συντιθεὶς ἅπαν γένος.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

τί χρῆμα δράσειν ἢ τί μὴ δράσειν; λέγε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μήτ' αὐτὸς ἐκ γῆς σῆς ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖν ποτε,
μήτ' ἄλλος ἤν τις τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν ἄγειν
χρῄζῃ, μεθήσειν ζῶν ἑκουσίῳ τρόπῳ.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ὄμνυμι Γαῖαν Ἡλίου θ' ἁγνὸν σέβας [1]
θεούς τε πάντας ἐμμενεῖν ἅ σου κλύω.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀρκεῖ· τί δ' ὅρκῳ τῷδε μὴ 'μμένων πάθοις;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ἃ τοῖσι δυσσεβοῦσι γίγνεται βροτῶν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

χαίρων πορεύου· πάντα γὰρ καλῶς ἔχει.
κἀγὼ πόλιν σὴν ὡς τάχιστ' ἀφίξομαι,
πράξασ' ἃ μέλλω καὶ τυχοῦσ' ἃ βούλομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλά σ' ὁ Μαίας πομπαῖος ἄναξ
πελάσειε δόμοις, ὧν τ' ἐπίνοιαν

[1] Porson: MSS. vary between **λαμπρὸν φῶς** and **φάος**.

AEGEUS

Foresight exceeding, lady, in thy words.
Yet, if this be thy will, I draw not back.
Yea, for myself is this the safest course,
To have a plea to show unto thy foes;
And firmer stands thy cause. The Oath-gods name.

MEDEA

Swear by Earth's plain, and by my father's father,
The Sun, and join the Gods' whole race thereto.

AEGEUS

That I will do or not do—what? Say on.

MEDEA

Never thyself to cast me forth thy land,
Nor, if a foe of mine would hale me thence,
To yield me willingly up, while thou dost live.

AEGEUS

By Earth, the Sun's pure majesty, and all
The Gods, I swear to abide by this thou hast said.

MEDEA

Enough. For broken troth what penalty?

AEGEUS

The worst that scourgeth God-despising men.

MEDEA

Pass on thy way rejoicing: all is well.
I too will come with all speed to thy burg,
When mine intent is wrought, my wish attained.

[*Exit* AEGEUS.

CHORUS

Now the Scion of Maia, the Wayfarer's King,
Bring thee safe to thine home, and the dream of thine heart,

σπεύδεις κατέχων πράξειας, ἐπεὶ
γενναῖος ἀνήρ,
Αἰγεῦ, παρ' ἐμοὶ δεδόκησαι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ Ζεῦ Δίκη τε Ζηνὸς Ἡλίου τε φῶς,
νῦν καλλίνικοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι,
γενησόμεσθα κεὶς ὁδὸν βεβήκαμεν·
νῦν ἐλπὶς ἐχθροὺς τοὺς ἐμοὺς τίσειν δίκην.
οὗτος γὰρ ἁνὴρ ᾗ μάλιστ' ἐκάμνομεν
λιμὴν πέφανται τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων·
ἐκ τοῦδ' ἀναψόμεσθα πρυμνήτην κάλων,
μολόντες ἄστυ καὶ πόλισμα Παλλάδος.
ἤδη δὲ πάντα τἀμά σοι βουλεύματα
λέξω· δέχου δὲ μὴ πρὸς ἡδονὴν λόγους.
πέμψασ' ἐμῶν τιν' οἰκετῶν Ἰάσονα
εἰς ὄψιν ἐλθεῖν τὴν ἐμὴν αἰτήσομαι·
μολόντι δ' αὐτῷ μαλθακοὺς λέξω λόγους,
ὡς καὶ δοκεῖ μοι ταῦτα, καὶ καλῶς ἔχει·
γάμους τυράννων οὓς προδοὺς ἡμᾶς ἔχει
καὶ ξύμφορ' εἶναι καὶ καλῶς ἐγνωσμένα·
παῖδας δὲ μεῖναι τοὺς ἐμοὺς αἰτήσομαι,
οὐχ ὡς λίπω σφε πολεμίας ἐπὶ χθονὸς
ἐχθροῖσι παῖδας τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι,
ἀλλ' ὡς δόλοισι παῖδα βασιλέως κτάνω.
πέμψω γὰρ αὐτοὺς δῶρ' ἔχοντας ἐν χεροῖν,
νύμφῃ φέροντας, τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα,
λεπτόν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον·
κἄνπερ λαβοῦσα κόσμον ἀμφιθῇ χροΐ,
κακῶς ὀλεῖται πᾶς θ' ὃς ἂν θίγῃ κόρης·
τοιοῖσδε χρίσω φαρμάκοις δωρήματα.
ἐνταῦθα μὲν δὴ τόνδ' ἀπαλλάσσω λόγον·
ᾤμωξα δ' οἷον ἔργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον

The sweet visions that wing thy feet, mayst thou bring
To accomplishment, Aegeus, for now this thing
Hath taught me how noble thou art.

MEDEA

O Zeus, Zeus' daughter Justice, Light of the Sun!
Over my foes triumphant now, my friends,
Shall we become : our feet are on the path.
Now is there hope of vengeance on my foes.
For this man, there where my chief weakness lay,
Hath for my plots a haven in storm appeared.
To him my bark's stern-hawser make I fast,
To Pallas' burg and fortress when I go.
And all my plots to thee will I tell now ;
Nor look I that my words should pleasure thee :—
One of mine household will I send to Jason,
And will entreat him to my sight to come ;
And soft words, when he cometh, will I speak,
Saying, "Thy will is mine," and, "It is well";
Saying, his royal marriage, my betrayal,
Is our advantage, and right well devised.
I will petition that my sons may stay—
Not for that I would leave on hostile soil
Children of mine for foes to trample on,
But the king's daughter so by guile to slay.
For I will send them bearing gifts in hand
Unto the bride, that they may not be banished,
A robe fine-spun, a golden diadem.
If she receive and don mine ornaments,
Die shall she wretchedly, and all who touch her ;
With drugs so dread will I anoint my gifts.
Howbeit here I pass this story by,
And wail the deed that yet for me remains.

τοὐντεῦθεν ἡμῖν· τέκνα γὰρ κατακτενῶ
τἄμ'· οὔτις ἔστιν ὅστις ἐξαιρήσεται·
δόμον τε πάντα συγχέασ' Ἰάσονος
ἔξειμι γαίας, φιλτάτων παίδων φόνον
φεύγουσα καὶ τλᾶσ' ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον.
οὐ γὰρ γελᾶσθαι τλητὸν ἐξ ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι.
ἴτω· τί μοι ζῆν κέρδος; οὔτε μοι πατρὶς
οὔτ' οἶκος ἔστιν οὔτ' ἀποστροφὴ κακῶν.
ἡμάρτανον τόθ' ἡνίκ' ἐξελίμπανον
δόμους πατρῴους, ἀνδρὸς Ἕλληνος λόγοις
πεισθεῖσ', ὃς ἡμῖν σὺν θεῷ τίσει δίκην.
οὔτ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ γὰρ παῖδας ὄψεταί ποτε
ζῶντας τὸ λοιπὸν οὔτε τῆς νεοζύγου
νύμφης τεκνώσει παῖδ', ἐπεὶ κακὴν κακῶς
θανεῖν σφ' ἀνάγκη τοῖς ἐμοῖσι φαρμάκοις.
μηδείς με φαύλην κἀσθενῆ νομιζέτω
μηδ' ἡσυχαίαν, ἀλλὰ θατέρου τρόπου,
βαρεῖαν ἐχθροῖς καὶ φίλοισιν εὐμενῆ·
τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων εὐκλεέστατος βίος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐπείπερ ἡμῖν τόνδ' ἐκοίνωσας λόγον,
σέ τ' ὠφελεῖν θέλουσα, καὶ νόμοις βροτῶν
ξυλλαμβάνουσα, δρᾶν σ' ἀπεννέπω τάδε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλως· σοὶ δὲ συγγνώμη λέγειν
τάδ' ἐστί, μὴ πάσχουσαν ὡς ἐγὼ κακῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλὰ κτανεῖν σὼ παῖδε τολμήσεις, γύναι;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὕτω γὰρ ἂν μάλιστα δηχθείη πόσις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ δ' ἂν γένοιό γ' ἀθλιωτάτη γυνή.

To bring to pass; for I will slay my children,
Yea, mine: no man shall pluck them from mine hand.
Then, having brought all Jason's house to wrack,
I leave the land, fleeing my dear babes' blood,
And having dared a deed most impious.
For unendurable are mocks of foes.
Let all go: what is life to me? Nor country
Nor home have I, nor refuge from mine ills.
Then erred I, in the day when I forsook
My father's halls, by yon Greek's words beguiled,
Who with God's help shall render me requital.
For never living shall he see henceforth
The sons I bare him, nor shall he beget
A son of his new bride, that wretch foredoomed
In agony to die by drugs of mine.
Let none account me impotent, nor weak,
Nor spiritless!—O nay, in other sort,
Grim to my foes, and kindly to my friends.
Most glorious is the life of such as I.

CHORUS

Since thou hast made me partner of this tale,—
Wishing to help thee, and yet championing
The laws of men, I say, do thou not this!

MEDEA

It cannot be but so: yet reason is
That thou say this, who art not wronged as I.

CHORUS

Woman, wilt have the heart to slay thy sons?

MEDEA

Yea: so mine husband's heart shall most be wrung.

CHORUS

But thou of wives most wretched shouldst become.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἴτω· περισσοὶ πάντες οὑν μέσῳ λόγοι.
ἀλλ' εἶα χώρει καὶ κόμιζ' Ἰάσονα·
εἰς πάντα γὰρ δὴ σοὶ τὰ πιστὰ χρώμεθα.
λέξῃς δὲ μηδὲν τῶν ἐμοὶ δεδογμένων,
εἴπερ φρονεῖς εὖ δεσπόταις γυνή τ' ἔφυς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἐρεχθεΐδαι τὸ παλαιὸν ὄλβιοι — στρ. α'
καὶ θεῶν παῖδες μακάρων, ἱερᾶς
χώρας ἀπορθήτου τ' ἀποφερβόμενοι
κλεινοτάταν σοφίαν, ἀεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου
βαίνοντες ἁβρῶς αἰθέρος, ἔνθα ποθ' ἁγνὰς
ἐννέα Πιερίδας Μούσας λέγουσι
ξανθὰν Ἁρμονίαν φυτεῦσαι·

τοῦ καλλινάου τ' ἀπὸ Κηφισοῦ ῥοὰς — ἀντ. α'
τὰν Κύπριν κλῄζουσιν ἀφυσσαμέναν
χώραν καταπνεῦσαι μετρίας ἀνέμων αὔρας·
ἀεὶ δ' ἐπιβαλλομέναν
χαίταισιν εὐώδη ῥοδέων πλόκον ἀνθέων
τᾷ σοφίᾳ παρέδρους πέμπειν ἔρωτας,
παντοίας ἀρετᾶς ξυνεργούς.

πῶς οὖν ἱερῶν ποταμῶν — στρ. β'
ἢ πόλις ἢ φίλων
πόμπιμός σε χώρα

MEDEA

So be it: wasted are all hindering words.
But ho! [*enter* NURSE] go thou and Jason bring to me—
Thou whom I use for every deed of trust,
And look thou tell none aught of mine intent,
If thine is loyal service, thou a woman.

[*Exeunt* MEDEA *and* NURSE.

CHORUS

O happy the race in the ages olden (*Str.* 1)
Of Erechtheus, the seed of the blest Gods' line,
In a land unravaged, peace-enfolden,
Aye quaffing of Wisdom's glorious wine,
Ever through air clear-shining brightly
As on wings uplifted pacing lightly,
Where Harmonia, they tell, of the tresses golden,
Bare the Pierid Muses, the stainless Nine.[1]

(*Ant.* 1)

And the streams of Cephisus the lovely-flowing
They tell how the Lady of Cyprus drew,
And in Zephyr-wafts of the winds sweet-blowing
Breathed far over the land their dew.
And she sendeth her Loves which, throned in glory
By Wisdom, fashion all virtue's story;
And over her hair is she throwing, throwing,
Roses in odorous wreaths aye new.

Re-enter MEDEA. (*Str.* 2)

How then should the hallowed city,
The city of sacred waters,
Which shields with her guardian hand

[1] Another interpretation is equally admitted by the Greek—"Grew, sown by the Muses, the stainless Nine."

τὰν παιδολέτειραν ἕξει,
τὰν οὐχ ὁσίαν μετ᾿ ἄλλων ;
σκέψαι τεκέων πλαγάν,
σκέψαι φόνον οἷον αἴρει.
μή, πρὸς γονάτων σε πάντως
πάντῃ σ᾿ ἱκετεύομεν,
τέκνα φονεύσῃς.

πόθεν θράσος †ἢ φρενὸς ἢ ἀντ. β΄
χειρὶ τέκνοις σέθεν
καρδίᾳ τε λήψει,†
δεινὰν προσάγουσα τόλμαν ;
πῶς δ᾿ ὄμματα προσβαλοῦσα
τέκνοις ἄδακρυν μοῖραν
σχήσεις φόνου ; οὐ δυνάσει,
παίδων ἱκετᾶν πιτνόντων,
τέγξαι χέρα φοινίαν
τλάμονι θυμῷ.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἥκω κελευσθείς· καὶ γὰρ οὖσα δυσμενὴς
οὔ τἂν ἁμάρτοις τοῦδέ γ᾿, ἀλλ᾿ ἀκούσομαι
τί χρῆμα βούλει καινὸν ἐξ ἐμοῦ, γύναι.

All friends that would fare through her land,
Receive a murderess banned,
Who had slaughtered her babes without pity,
A pollution amidst of her daughters?

In thine heart's thoughts set it before thee—
To murder the fruit of thy womb!
O think what it meaneth to slay
Thy sons—what a deed this day
Thou wouldst do! By thy knees we pray,
By heaven and earth we implore thee,
Deal not to thy babes such a doom!

(*Ant.* 2)

O whence, and O whence wilt thou gain thee
Such desperate hardihood
That for spirit so fiendish shall serve,
That shall strengthen thine heart, that shall nerve
Thine hand, that it shall not swerve
From the ruthless deed that shall stain thee
With horror of children's blood?

O how, when thine eyes thou art turning
On thy little ones, wilt thou refrain
The motherhood in thee, to feel
No upwelling of tears? Canst thou steel
Thy breast when thy children kneel,
To crimson thine hand, with unyearning
Heart for thy darlings slain?

Enter JASON.

JASON

I at thy bidding come: albeit my foe,
This grace thou shalt not miss; but I will hear
What new thing, lady, thou dost wish of me.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

Ἰᾶσον, αἰτοῦμαί σε τῶν εἰρημένων
συγγνώμον' εἶναι· τὰς δ' ἐμὰς ὀργὰς φέρειν
εἰκός σ', ἐπεὶ νῷν πόλλ' ὑπείργασται φίλα.
ἐγὼ δ' ἐμαυτῇ διὰ λόγων ἀφικόμην,
κἀλοιδόρησα· σχετλία, τί μαίνομαι
καὶ δυσμεναίνω τοῖσι βουλεύουσιν εὖ,
ἐχθρὰ δὲ γαίας κοιράνοις καθίσταμαι
πόσει θ', ὃς ἡμῖν δρᾷ τὰ συμφορώτατα,
γήμας τύραννον καὶ κασιγνήτους τέκνοις
ἐμοῖς φυτεύων ; οὐκ ἀπαλλαχθήσομαι
θυμοῦ ; τί πάσχω, θεῶν ποριζόντων καλῶς ;
οὐκ εἰσὶ μέν μοι παῖδες, οἶδα δὲ χθόνα
φεύγοντας ἡμᾶς καὶ σπανίζοντας φίλων ;
ταῦτ' ἐννοήσασ' ᾐσθόμην ἀβουλίαν
πολλὴν ἔχουσα καὶ μάτην θυμουμένη.
νῦν οὖν ἐπαινῶ· σωφρονεῖν τέ μοι δοκεῖς
κῆδος τόδ' ἡμῖν προσλαβών, ἐγὼ δ' ἄφρων,
ᾗ χρῆν μετεῖναι τῶνδε τῶν βουλευμάτων
καὶ ξυμπεραίνειν καὶ παρεστάναι λέχει
νύμφην τε κηδεύουσαν ἥδεσθαι σέθεν.
ἀλλ' ἐσμὲν οἷόν ἐσμεν, οὐκ ἐρῶ κακόν,
γυναῖκες· οὔκουν χρῆν σ' ὁμοιοῦσθαι κακοῖς
οὐδ' ἀντιτείνειν νήπι' ἀντὶ νηπίων.
παριέμεσθα, καί φαμεν κακῶς φρονεῖν
τότ', ἀλλ' ἄμεινον νῦν βεβούλευμαι τόδε.
ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦτε, λείπετε στέγας,
ἐξέλθετ', ἀσπάσασθε καὶ προσείπατε
πατέρα μεθ' ἡμῶν, καὶ διαλλάχθηθ' ἅμα
τῆς πρόσθεν ἔχθρας εἰς φίλους μητρὸς μέτα·
σπονδαὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν καὶ μεθέστηκεν χόλος.
λάβεσθε χειρὸς δεξιᾶς· οἴμοι κακῶν.

MEDEA

Jason, I ask thee to forgive the words
Late-spoken. Well thou mayest gently bear
With my wild mood, for all the old love's sake.
Now have I called myself to account, and railed
Upon myself—"Wretch, wherefore am I mad?
And wherefore rage against good counsellors,
And am at feud with rulers of the land,
And with my lord, who works my veriest good,
Wedding a royal house, to raise up brethren
Unto my sons? Shall I not cease from wrath?
What aileth me, when the Gods proffer boons?
Have I not children? Know I not that we
Are exiles from our own land, lacking friends?"
Thus musing, was I ware that I had nursed
Folly exceeding, anger without cause.
Now then I praise thee: wise thou seem'st to me
In gaining us this kinship, senseless I,
Who in these counsels should have been thine ally,
Have furthered all, have decked the bridal couch,
And joyed to minister unto the bride.
But we are—women: needs not harsher word.
Yet shouldst thou not for evil render evil,
Nor pit against my folly folly of thine.
I yield, confessing mine unwisdom then,
But unto better counsels now am come.
Children, my children, hither: leave the house;

[*Enter* CHILDREN.

Come forth, salute your father, and with me
Bid him farewell: be reconciled to friends
Ye, with your mother, from the hate o'erpast.
Truce is between us, rancour hath given place.
Clasp ye his right hand. Woe for ambushed ills!

ὡς ἐννοοῦμαι δή τι τῶν κεκρυμμένων.
ἆρ', ὦ τέκν', οὕτω καὶ πολὺν ζῶντες χρόνον
φίλην ὀρέξετ' ὠλένην; τάλαιν' ἐγώ,
ὡς ἀρτίδακρύς εἰμι καὶ φόβου πλέα.
χρόνῳ δὲ νεῖκος πατρὸς ἐξαιρουμένη
ὄψιν τέρειναν τήνδ' ἔπλησα δακρύων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κἀμοὶ κατ' ὄσσων χλωρὸν ὡρμήθη δάκρυ·
καὶ μὴ προβαίη μεῖζον ἢ τὸ νῦν κακόν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

αἰνῶ, γύναι, τάδ', οὐδ' ἐκεῖνα μέμφομαι·
εἰκὸς γὰρ ὀργὰς θῆλυ ποιεῖσθαι γένος,
†γάμους παρεμπολῶντος ἀλλοίους, πόσει.†
ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ λῷον σὸν μεθέστηκεν κέαρ,
ἔγνως δὲ τὴν νικῶσαν ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ
βουλήν· γυναικὸς ἔργα ταῦτα σώφρονος.
ὑμῖν δέ, παῖδες, οὐκ ἀφροντίστως πατὴρ
πολλὴν ἔθηκε σὺν θεοῖς προμηθίαν.
οἶμαι γὰρ ὑμᾶς τῆσδε γῆς Κορινθίας
τὰ πρῶτ' ἔσεσθαι σὺν κασιγνήτοις ἔτι.
ἀλλ' αὐξάνεσθε· τἄλλα δ' ἐξεργάζεται
πατήρ τε καὶ θεῶν ὅστις ἐστὶν εὐμενής·
ἴδοιμι δ' ὑμᾶς εὐτραφεῖς ἥβης τέλος
μολόντας, ἐχθρῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ὑπερτέρους.
αὕτη, τί χλωροῖς δακρύοις τέγγεις κόρας,
στρέψασα λευκὴν ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα,
κοὐκ ἀσμένη τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ δέχει λόγον;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐδέν· τέκνων τῶνδ' ἐννοουμένη πέρι.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

θάρσει νυν· εὖ γὰρ τῶνδ' ἐγὼ θήσω πέρι.

I am haunted by the shadow of hidden things!
Ah children, will ye thus, through many a year
Living, still reach him loving arms? Ah me,
How swift to weep am I, how full of fear!
Feuds with your father ended—ah, so late!—
Have filled with tears these soft-relenting eyes.

CHORUS

And from mine eyes start tears of pale dismay.
Ah, may no evil worse than this befall!

JASON

Lady, I praise this mood, yet blame not that:
'Tis nothing strange that womankind should rage
When the spouse trafficketh in alien marriage.
But now to better thoughts thine heart hath turned,
And thou, though late, hast seen which policy
Must win: a prudent woman's part is this.
And for you, children, not unheedfully
Your sire hath ta'en much forethought, so help heaven.
For ye, I ween, in this Corinthian land
Shall with your brethren stand the foremost yet.
Grow ye in strength: the rest shall by your sire,
And whatso God is gracious, be wrought out.
You may I see to goodly stature grown,
In manhood's prime, triumphant o'er my foes.
Thou, why with wan tears thus bedew thine eyes,
Turning away from them thy pallid cheek?
Why hear'st thou not with gladness this my speech?

MEDEA

'Tis naught; but o'er these children broods mine heart.

JASON

Fear not: all will I order well for them.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

δράσω τάδ᾽· οὔτοι σοῖς ἀπιστήσω λόγοις.
γυνὴ δὲ θῆλυ κἀπὶ δακρύοις ἔφυ.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

τί δή, τάλαινα, τοῖσδ᾽ ἐπιστένεις τέκνοις;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἔτικτον αὐτούς· ζῆν δ᾽ ὅτ᾽ ἐξηύχου τέκνα,
εἰσῆλθέ μ᾽ οἶκτος εἰ γενήσεται τάδε.
ἀλλ᾽ ὧνπερ εἵνεκ᾽ εἰς ἐμοὺς ἥκεις λόγους,
τὰ μὲν λέλεκται, τῶν δ᾽ ἐγὼ μνησθήσομαι.
ἐπεὶ τυράννοις γῆς μ᾽ ἀποστεῖλαι δοκεῖ,—
κἀμοὶ τάδ᾽ ἐστὶ λῷστα, γιγνώσκω καλῶς,
μήτ᾽ ἐμποδὼν σοὶ μήτε κοιράνοις χθονὸς
ναίειν, δοκῶ γὰρ δυσμενὴς εἶναι δόμοις,—
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐκ γῆς τῆσδ᾽ ἀπαίρομεν φυγῇ,
παῖδες δ᾽ ὅπως ἂν ἐκτραφῶσι σῇ χερί,
αἰτοῦ Κρέοντα τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδ᾽ ἂν εἰ πείσαιμι, πειρᾶσθαι δὲ χρή.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σὺ δ᾽ ἀλλὰ σὴν κέλευσον αἰτεῖσθαι πατρὸς
γυναῖκα παῖδας τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

μάλιστα, καὶ πείσειν γε δοξάζω σφ᾽ ἐγώ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

εἴπερ γυναικῶν ἐστι τῶν ἄλλων μία.
συλλήψομαι δὲ τοῦδέ σοι κἀγὼ πόνου·
πέμψω γὰρ αὐτῇ δῶρ᾽ ἃ καλλιστεύεται
τῶν νῦν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, οἶδ᾽ ἐγώ, πολύ,
λεπτόν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον
παῖδας φέροντας. ἀλλ᾽ ὅσον τάχος χρεὼν
κόσμον κομίζειν δεῦρο προσπόλων τινά.

MEDEA

I will be brave—will not mistrust thy words;
But woman is but woman—born for tears.

JASON

Why, hapless one, dost thou sigh over these?

MEDEA

I bare them. When thou prayedst life for them,
Pity stole o'er me, whispering, "Shall this be?"
But that for which thou cam'st to speech of me
In part is said; to speak the rest is mine:
Since the king pleaseth forth the land to send me,—
Yea, for me too 'tis best, I know it well,
That I bide not, a stumblingblock to thee
And the land's lords, whose house's foe I seem,—
Lo, from this land I fare to exile forth:
But, that my sons by thine hand may be reared,
Entreat thou Creon that they be not banished.

JASON

Prevail I may not, yet must I essay.

MEDEA

Nay then, thy bride bid thou to pray her sire
That thy sons be not banished from this land.

JASON

Yea surely; and, I trow, her shall I win.

MEDEA

If of her sister women she is one.
I too will bear a part in thine endeavour;
For I will send her gifts outrivalling far
In beauty aught in these days seen, I know,
A robe fine-spun, a golden diadem;
Our sons to bear them. Now must an attendant
With all speed hither bring the ornaments.

[*Handmaid goes.*

εὐδαιμονήσει δ' οὐχ ἓν ἀλλὰ μυρία,
ἀνδρός τ' ἀρίστου σοῦ τυχοῦσ' ὁμευνέτου
κεκτημένη τε κόσμον ὅν ποθ' Ἥλιος
πατρὸς πατὴρ δίδωσιν ἐκγόνοισιν οἷς.
λάζυσθε φερνὰς τάσδε, παῖδες, εἰς χέρας
καὶ τῇ τυράννῳ μακαρίᾳ νύμφῃ δότε
φέροντες· οὔτοι δῶρα μεμπτὰ δέξεται.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

τί δ', ὦ ματαία, τῶνδε σὰς κενοῖς χέρας;
δοκεῖς σπανίζειν δῶμα βασιλικὸν πέπλων,
δοκεῖς δὲ χρυσοῦ; σῷζε, μὴ δίδου τάδε.
εἴπερ γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἀξιοῖ λόγου τινὸς
γυνή, προθήσει χρημάτων, σάφ' οἶδ' ἐγώ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μή μοι σύ· πείθειν δῶρα καὶ θεοὺς λόγος·
χρυσὸς δὲ κρείσσων μυρίων λόγων βροτοῖς·
κείνης ὁ δαίμων, κεῖνα νῦν αὔξει θεός·
νέα τυραννεῖ· τῶν δ' ἐμῶν παίδων φυγὰς
ψυχῆς ἂν ἀλλαξαίμεθ', οὐ χρυσοῦ μόνον.
ἀλλ', ὦ τέκν', εἰσελθόντε πλουσίους δόμους
πατρὸς νέαν γυναῖκα, δεσπότιν δ' ἐμήν,
ἱκετεύετ', ἐξαιτεῖσθε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα,
κόσμον διδόντες—τοῦδε γὰρ μάλιστα δεῖ—
εἰς χεῖρ' ἐκείνην δῶρα δέξασθαι τάδε.
ἴθ' ὡς τάχιστα· μητρὶ δ' ὧν ἐρᾷ τυχεῖν
εὐάγγελοι γένοισθε πράξαντες καλῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νῦν ἐλπίδες οὐκέτι μοι παίδων ζόας, *στρ. α*
οὐκέτι· στείχουσι γὰρ ἐς φόνον ἤδη.

Blessings shall hers be, not one, but untold,
Who winneth thee for lord, a peerless spouse,
Who owneth ornaments which once the Sun,
My father's father, to his offspring gave!

Enter handmaid with casket.

Take in your hands, my sons, these bridal gifts,
And to the happy princess-bride bear ye
And give—my gifts she shall not lightly esteem!

JASON

But, fond one, why make void thine hands of these?
Deem'st thou a royal house hath lack of robes,
Or gold, deem'st thou? Keep these and give them not.
For, if my wife esteems me aught, my wish
Will she prefer to treasures, well I wot.

MEDEA

Nay, speak not so: gifts sway the Gods, they say.
Gold weigheth more with men than countless words.
Hers fortune is; God favoureth now her cause—
Young, and a queen! Life would I give for ransom
Of my sons' banishment, not gold alone.
Now, children, enter ye the halls of wealth.
Unto your sire's new wife, my lady-queen,
Make supplication, pray ye be not exiled,
And give mine ornaments—most importeth this,
That she in her own hands receive my gifts.
Haste ye, and to your mother bring glad tidings
Of good success in that she longs to win.

[*Exeunt* JASON *and* CHILDREN.

CHORUS (*Str.* 1)

Now for the life of the children mine hope hath been turned to despairing.
No hope any more! On the slaughterward path even now are they faring!

δέξεται νύμφα χρυσέων ἀναδεσμῶν
δέξεται δύστανος ἄταν·
ξανθᾷ δ' ἀμφὶ κόμᾳ θήσει τὸν Ἅιδα
κόσμον αὐτὰ χεροῖν.

πείσει χάρις ἀμβρόσιός τ' αὐγὰ πέπλον ἀντ. α'
χρυσότευκτόν τε στέφανον περιθέσθαι·
νερτέροις δ' ἤδη πάρα νυμφοκομήσει.
τοῖον εἰς ἕρκον πεσεῖται
καὶ μοῖραν θανάτου δύστανος· ἄταν δ'
οὐχ ὑπερφεύξεται.

σὺ δ', ὦ τάλαν, ὦ κακόνυμφε στρ. β'
κηδεμὼν τυράννων,
παισὶν οὐ κατειδὼς
ὄλεθρον βιοτᾷ προσάγεις, ἀλόχῳ
τε σᾷ στυγερὸν θάνατον.
δύστανε μοίρας, ὅσον παροίχει.

μεταστένομαι δὲ σὸν ἄλγος, ἀντ. β'
ὦ τάλαινα παίδων
μᾶτερ, ἃ φονεύσεις
τέκνα νυμφιδίων ἕνεκεν λεχέων,
ἅ σοι προλιπὼν ἀνόμως
ἄλλῃ ξυνοικεῖ πόσις συνεύνῳ.

The bride shall receive it, the diadem-garland that beareth enfolden
Doom for the hapless mid glittering sheen:
And to set the adorning of Hades about her tresses golden
She shall take it her hands between.

(*Ant.* 1)

For its glamour of beauty, its splendour unearthly, shall swiftly persuade her
To bedeck her with robe and with gold-wrought crown: she shall soon have arrayed her
In attire as a bride in the presence of phantoms from Hades uprisen;
In such dread gin shall her feet be ta'en:
In the weird of death shall the hapless be whelmed, and from Doom's dark prison
Shall she steal forth never again.

(*Str.* 2)

And thou, wretch, bridegroom accurst, who art fain of a princely alliance,
Blasting thou bringest—unknowing, unthinking!—
Of life on thy sons, and thy bride shall to foul death plight her affiance.
How far from thy fortune of old art thou sinking!

(*Ant.* 2)

And amidst my lamentings I mourn for thine anguish, O hapless mother
Of children, who makest thee ready to slaughter
Thy babes, to avenge thee on him who would lawlessly wed with another,
Would forsake thee to dwell with a prince's daughter,

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

δέσποιν᾿, ἀφεῖνται παῖδες οἵδε σοὶ φυγῆς,
καὶ δῶρα νύμφη βασιλὶς ἀσμένη χεροῖν
ἐδέξατ᾿· εἰρήνη δὲ τἀκεῖθεν τέκνοις.
ἔα.
τί συγχυθεῖσ᾿ ἕστηκας ἡνίκ᾿ εὐτυχεῖς;
τί σὴν ἔστρεψας ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα,
κοὐκ ἀσμένη τόνδ᾿ ἐξ ἐμοῦ δέχει λόγον;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τάδ᾿ οὐ ξυνῳδὰ τοῖσιν ἐξηγγελμένοις.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ μάλ᾿ αὖθις.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

μῶν τιν᾿ ἀγγέλλων τύχην
οὐκ οἶδα, δόξης δ᾿ ἐσφάλην εὐαγγέλου;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἤγγειλας οἷ᾿ ἤγγειλας· οὐ σὲ μέμφομαι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί δὴ κατηφεῖς ὄμμα καὶ δακρυρροεῖς;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πολλή μ᾿ ἀνάγκη, πρέσβυ· ταῦτα γὰρ θεοὶ
κἀγὼ κακῶς φρονοῦσ᾿ ἐμηχανησάμην.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θάρσει· κάτει τοι καὶ σὺ πρὸς τέκνων ἔτι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἄλλους κατάξω πρόσθεν ἡ τάλαιν᾿ ἐγώ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὔτοι μόνη σὺ σῶν ἀπεζύγης τέκνων.
κούφως φέρειν χρὴ θνητὸν ὄντα συμφοράς.

Enter CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN, *with* CHILDREN.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Mistress, remission for thy sons of exile!
Thy gifts the princess-bride with joy received
In hand; and there is peace unto thy sons.
Ha!
Why dost thou stand confounded mid good hap?
Now wherefore turnest thou thy face away,
And dost not hear with gladness this my speech?

MEDEA

Woe's me!

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

This cry is to the tidings not attuned.

MEDEA

Woe yet again!

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Can I have brought ill hap
Unwitting—erred in deeming these glad tidings?

MEDEA

As they are, are thy tidings: thee I blame not.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Why down-drooped is thine eye? Why flow thy tears?

MEDEA

Needs must they, ancient; for these things the Gods
And I withal—O fool!—have ill contrived.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Fear not: thy children yet shall bring thee home.

MEDEA

Others ere then shall I send home—ah me!

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Not thou alone art severed from thy sons.
Submissively must mortals bear mischance.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

δράσω τάδ'. ἀλλὰ βαῖνε δωμάτων ἔσω
καὶ παισὶ πόρσυν' οἷα χρὴ καθ' ἡμέραν.
ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, σφῷν μὲν ἔστι δὴ πόλις
καὶ δῶμ', ἐν ᾧ λιπόντες ἀθλίαν ἐμὲ
οἰκήσετ' ἀεὶ μητρὸς ἐστερημένοι·
ἐγὼ δ' ἐς ἄλλην γαῖαν εἶμι δὴ φυγάς,
πρὶν σφῷν ὄνασθαι κἀπιδεῖν εὐδαίμονας,
πρὶν λέκτρα καὶ γυναῖκα καὶ γαμηλίους
εὐνὰς ἀγῆλαι λαμπάδας τ' ἀνασχεθεῖν.
ὦ δυστάλαινα τῆς ἐμῆς αὐθαδίας
ἄλλως ἄρ' ὑμᾶς, ὦ τέκν', ἐξεθρεψάμην,
ἄλλως δ' ἐμόχθουν καὶ κατεξάνθην πόνοις,
στερρὰς ἐνεγκοῦσ' ἐν τόκοις ἀλγηδόνας.
ἦ μήν ποθ' ἡ δύστηνος εἶχον ἐλπίδας
πολλὰς ἐν ὑμῖν, γηροβοσκήσειν τ' ἐμὲ
καὶ κατθανοῦσαν χερσὶν εὖ περιστελεῖν,
ζηλωτὸν ἀνθρώποισι· νῦν δ' ὄλωλε δὴ
γλυκεῖα φροντίς. σφῷν γὰρ ἐστερημένη
λυπρὸν διάξω βίοτον ἀλγεινόν τ' ἐμοί.
ὑμεῖς δὲ μητέρ' οὐκέτ' ὄμμασιν φίλοις
ὄψεσθ', ἐς ἄλλο σχῆμ' ἀποστάντες βίου.
φεῦ φεῦ· τί προσδέρκεσθέ μ' ὄμμασιν, τέκνα;
τί προσγελᾶτε τὸν πανύστατον γέλων;
αἰαῖ· τί δράσω; καρδία γὰρ οἴχεται,
γυναῖκες, ὄμμα φαιδρὸν ὡς εἶδον τέκνων.
οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην· χαιρέτω βουλεύματα
τὰ πρόσθεν· ἄξω παῖδας ἐκ γαίας ἐμούς.
τί δεῖ με πατέρα τῶνδε τοῖς τούτων κακοῖς
λυποῦσαν αὐτὴν δὶς τόσα κτᾶσθαι κακά;
οὐ δῆτ' ἔγωγε. χαιρέτω βουλεύματα.
καίτοι τί πάσχω; βούλομαι γέλωτ' ὀφλεῖν

MEDEA

This will I: but within the house go thou,
And for my children's daily needs prepare.

[*Exit* CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN.

O children, children, yours a city is,
And yours a home, where, leaving wretched me,
Ye shall abide, for ever motherless!
I shall go exiled to another land,
Ere I have joyed in you, have seen your bliss,
Ere I have decked for you the couch, the bride,
The bridal bower, and held the torch on high.
O me accurst in this my desperate mood!
For naught, for naught, my babes, I nurtured you,
And all for naught I laboured, travail-worn,
Bearing sharp anguish in your hour of birth.
Ah for the hopes—unhappy!—all mine hopes
Of ministering hands about mine age,
Of dying folded round with loving arms,
All men's desire! But now—'tis past—'tis past,
That sweet imagining! Forlorn of you
A bitter life and woeful shall I waste.
Your mother never more with loving eyes
Shall ye behold, passed to another life.
Woe! woe! why gaze your eyes on me, my darlings?
Why smile to me the latest smile of all?
Alas! what shall I do? Mine heart is failing
As I behold the light in my sons' eyes!
Women, I cannot! farewell, purposes
O'erpast! I take my children from the land.
What need to wring their father's heart with ills
Of these, to gain myself ills twice so many?
Not I, not I! Ye purposes, farewell!
Yet—yet—what ails me? Would I earn derision,

ἐχθροὺς μεθεῖσα τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἀζημίους;
τολμητέον τάδ᾽. ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐμῆς κάκης,
τὸ καὶ προέσθαι μαλθακοὺς λόγους φρενί.
χωρεῖτε παῖδες εἰς δόμους· ὅτῳ δὲ μὴ
θέμις παρεῖναι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι θύμασιν,
αὐτῷ μελήσει· χεῖρα δ᾽ οὐ διαφθερῶ.
ἆ ἆ.
μὴ δῆτα, θυμέ, μὴ σύ γ᾽ ἐργάσῃ τάδε·
ἔασον αὐτούς, ὦ τάλαν, φεῖσαι τέκνων·
ἐκεῖ μεθ᾽ ἡμῶν ζῶντες εὐφρανοῦσί σε.
μὰ τοὺς παρ᾽ Ἅιδῃ νερτέρους ἀλάστορας,
οὔτοι ποτ᾽ ἔσται τοῦθ᾽ ὅπως ἐχθροῖς ἐγὼ
παῖδας παρήσω τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι.
[πάντως σφ᾽ ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν· ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή,
ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν οἵπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν.]
πάντως πέπρωται ταῦτα, κοὐκ ἐκφεύξεται.
καὶ δὴ ᾽πὶ κρατὶ στέφανος, ἐν πέπλοισι δὲ
νύμφη τύραννος ὄλλυται, σάφ᾽ οἶδ᾽ ἐγώ.
ἀλλ᾽, εἶμι γὰρ δὴ τλημονεστάτην ὁδόν,
καὶ τούσδε πέμψω τλημονεστέραν ἔτι,
παῖδας προσειπεῖν βούλομαι. δότ᾽, ὦ τέκνα,
δότ᾽ ἀσπάσασθαι μητρὶ δεξιὰν χέρα.
ὦ φιλτάτη χείρ, φίλτατον δέ μοι στόμα
καὶ σχῆμα καὶ πρόσωπον εὐγενὲς τέκνων,
εὐδαιμονοίτην, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκεῖ· τὰ δ᾽ ἐνθάδε
πατὴρ ἀφείλετ᾽. ὦ γλυκεῖα προσβολή,
ὦ μαλθακὸς χρὼς πνεῦμά θ᾽ ἥδιστον τέκνων.
χωρεῖτε χωρεῖτ᾽. οὐκέτ᾽ εἰμὶ προσβλέπειν
οἵα τ᾽ ἐς ὑμᾶς, ἀλλὰ νικῶμαι κακοῖς.
καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά·
θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων,
ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἴτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς.

Letting my foes slip from mine hand unpunished?
I must dare this. Out on my coward mood
That let words of relenting touch mine heart!
Children, pass ye within. [*Exeunt* CHILDREN.
Now, whoso may not
Sinless be present at my sacrifice,
On his head be it: mine hand faltereth not.
Oh! oh!
O heart, mine heart, do not—do not this deed!
Let them be, wretched heart, spare thou my babes!
There dwelling with me shall they gladden thee.
No!—by the nether fiends that dwell with Hades,
Never shall this betide, that I will leave
My children for my foes to trample on!

They needs must die. And, since it needs must be,
Even I will slay them, I, who gave them life.
All this is utter doom:—she shall not 'scape!
Yea, on her head the wreath is; in my robes
The princess-bride is perishing—I know it!
But—for I fare on journey most unhappy,
And shall speed these on yet unhappier—
I would speak to my sons. [*Re-enter* CHILDREN.
Give, O my babes,
Give to your mother the right hand to kiss.
O dearest hand, O lips most dear to me,
O form and noble feature of my children,
Blessing be on you—*there!*—for all things here
Your sire hath stolen. Sweet, O sweet embrace!
O children's roseleaf skin, O balmy breath!
Away, away! Strength faileth me to gaze
On you, but I am overcome of evil. [*Exeunt* CHILDREN.
Now, now, I learn what horrors I intend:
But passion overmastereth sober thought;
And this is cause of direst ills to men.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλάκις ἤδη
διὰ λεπτοτέρων μύθων ἔμολον
καὶ πρὸς ἁμίλλας ἦλθον μείζους
ἢ χρὴ γενεὰν θῆλυν ἐρευνᾶν·
ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔστιν μοῦσα καὶ ἡμῖν,
ἣ προσομιλεῖ σοφίας ἕνεκεν·
πάσαισι μὲν οὔ· παῦρον δὲ γένος—
μίαν[1] ἐν πολλαῖς εὕροις ἂν ἴσως—
οὐκ ἀπόμουσον τὸ γυναικῶν.

καί φημι βροτῶν οἵτινές εἰσιν
πάμπαν ἄπειροι μηδ' ἐφύτευσαν
παῖδας, προφέρειν εἰς εὐτυχίαν
τῶν γειναμένων.
οἱ μὲν ἄτεκνοι δι' ἀπειροσύνην
εἴθ' ἡδὺ βροτοῖς εἴτ' ἀνιαρὸν
παῖδες τελέθουσ' οὐχὶ τυχόντες
πολλῶν μόχθων ἀπέχονται·
οἷσι δὲ τέκνων ἔστιν ἐν οἴκοις
γλυκερὸν βλάστημ', ἐσορῶ μελέτῃ
κατατρυχομένους τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον·
πρῶτον μὲν ὅπως θρέψουσι καλῶς
βίοτόν θ' ὁπόθεν λείψουσι τέκνοις·
ἔτι δ' ἐκ τούτων εἴτ' ἐπὶ φλαύροις
εἴτ' ἐπὶ χρηστοῖς
μοχθοῦσι, τόδ' ἐστὶν ἄδηλον.

[1] Elmsley: for MSS. παῦρον δὲ δή (or τι) γένος.

CHORUS

I

Full oft ere this my soul hath scaled
  Lone heights of thought, empyreal steeps,
  Or plunged far down the darkling deeps,
Where woman's feebler heart hath failed :—

Yet wherefore failed? Should woman find
  No inspiration thrill her breast,
  Nor welcome ever that sweet guest
Of Song, that uttereth Wisdom's mind?

Alas ! not all ! Few, few are they,—
  Perchance amid a thousand one
  Thou shouldest find,—for whom the sun
Of poesy makes an inner day.

II

Now this I say—calm bliss, that ne'er
  Knew love's wild fever of the blood,
  The pains, the joys, of motherhood,
Passeth all parents' joy-blent care.

The childless, they that never prove
  If sunshine comes, or cloud, to men
  With babes—far lie beyond their ken
The toils, the griefs, of parent-love.

But they whose halls with flowerets sweet
  Of childhood bloom—I mark them aye
  Care-fretted, travailing alway
To win their loved ones nurture meet.

ἓν δὲ τὸ πάντων λοίσθιον ἤδη
πᾶσιν κατερῶ θνητοῖσι κακόν·
καὶ δὴ γὰρ ἅλις βιοτόν θ' ηὗρον,
σῶμά τ' ἐς ἥβην ἤλυθε τέκνων
χρηστοί τ' ἐγένοντ'· εἰ δὲ κυρήσει
δαίμων οὗτος, φροῦδος ἐς Ἅιδην
θάνατος προφέρων σώματα τέκνων.
πῶς οὖν λύει πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις
τήνδ' ἔτι λύπην ἀνιαροτάτην
παίδων ἕνεκεν
θνητοῖσι θεοὺς ἐπιβάλλειν;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

φίλαι, πάλαι δὴ προσμένουσα τὴν τύχην
καραδοκῶ τἀκεῖθεν οἷ προβήσεται.
καὶ δὴ δέδορκα τόνδε τῶν Ἰάσονος
στείχοντ' ὀπαδῶν· πνεῦμα δ' ἠρεθισμένον
δείκνυσιν ὥς τι καινὸν ἀγγελεῖ κακόν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ δεινὸν ἔργον παρανόμως εἰργασμένη
Μήδεια, φεῦγε φεῦγε, μήτε ναΐαν
λιποῦσ' ἀπήνην μήτ' ὄχον πεδοστιβῆ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δ' ἄξιόν μοι τῆσδε τυγχάνει φυγῆς;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὄλωλεν ἡ τύραννος ἀρτίως κόρη
Κρέων θ' ὁ φύσας φαρμάκων τῶν σῶν ὕπο.

III

One toils with love more strong than death :
Yet—yet—who knoweth whether he
A wise man or a fool shall be
To whom he shall his wealth bequeath ?

But last, but worst, remains to tell :
For though ye get you wealth enow,
And though your sons to manhood grow,
Fair sons and good :—if Death the fell,

To Hades vanishing, bears down
Your children's lives, what profit is
That Heaven hath laid, with all else, this
Upon mankind, lone sorrow's crown ?

MEDEA

Friends, long have I, abiding fortune's hap,
Expected what from yonder shall befall.
And lo, a man I see of Jason's train
Hitherward coming : his wild-fluttering breath
Proclaimeth him the herald of strange ills.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

O thou who hast wrought an awful deed and lawless,
Flee, O Medea, flee, nor once leave thou
The sea-wain, or the car that scours the plain.

MEDEA

Now what hath happed that calleth for such flight ?

MESSENGER

Dead is the princess even now, and dead
Creon her father, by thy poison-drugs.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

κάλλιστον εἶπας μῦθον, ἐν δ' εὐεργέταις
τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη καὶ φίλοις ἐμοῖς ἔσει.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τί φής; φρονεῖς μὲν ὀρθὰ κοὐ μαίνει, γύναι,
ἥτις τυράννων ἑστίαν ᾐκισμένην
χαίρεις κλύουσα κοὐ φοβεῖ τὰ τοιάδε;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἔχω τι κἀγὼ τοῖς γε σοῖς ἐναντίον
λόγοισιν εἰπεῖν· ἀλλὰ μὴ σπέρχου, φίλος,
λέξον δ' ὅπως ὤλοντο· δὶς τόσον γὰρ ἂν
τέρψειας ἡμᾶς, εἰ τεθνᾶσι παγκάκως.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἐπεὶ τέκνων σῶν ἦλθε δίπτυχος γονὴ
σὺν πατρὶ καὶ παρῆλθε νυμφικοὺς δόμους,
ἥσθημεν οἵπερ σοῖς ἐκάμνομεν κακοῖς
δμῶες· δι' οἴκων δ' εὐθὺς ἦν πολὺς λόγος
σὲ καὶ πόσιν σὸν νεῖκος ἐσπεῖσθαι τὸ πρίν.
κυνεῖ δ' ὁ μέν τις χεῖρ', ὁ δὲ ξανθὸν κάρα
παίδων· ἐγὼ δὲ καὐτὸς ἡδονῆς ὕπο
στέγας γυναικῶν σὺν τέκνοις ἅμ' ἑσπόμην.
δέσποινα δ' ἣν νῦν ἀντὶ σοῦ θαυμάζομεν,
πρὶν μὲν τέκνων σῶν εἰσιδεῖν ξυνωρίδα,
πρόθυμον εἶχ' ὀφθαλμὸν εἰς Ἰάσονα·
ἔπειτα μέντοι προὐκαλύψατ' ὄμματα
λευκήν τ' ἀπέστρεψ' ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα,
παίδων μυσαχθεῖσ' εἰσόδους· πόσις δὲ σὸς
ὀργὰς ἀφῄρει καὶ χόλον νεάνιδος
λέγων τάδ'· οὐ μὴ δυσμενὴς ἔσει φίλοις,
παύσει δὲ θυμοῦ καὶ πάλιν στρέψεις κάρα,
φίλους νομίζουσ' οὕσπερ ἂν πόσις σέθεν,
δέξει δὲ δῶρα καὶ παραιτήσει πατρὸς

MEDEA

A glorious tale thou tellest: thou henceforth
Art of my benefactors and my friends.

MESSENGER

What say'st? Of sound mind art thou, and not mad,
Who, hearing of the havoc of the hearth
Of kings, art glad, and hast no fear for this?

MEDEA

O yea: I too with words of controversy
Could answer thee:—yet be not hasty, friend,
But tell how died they: thou shouldst gladden me
Doubly, if these most horribly have perished.

MESSENGER

When, with their father, came thy children twain,
And passed into the halls for marriage decked,
Glad were we thralls who sorrowed for thy woes;
And straightway buzzed from ear to ear the tale
Of truce to old feuds 'twixt thy lord and thee.
One kissed the hand, and one the golden head
Of those thy sons: myself by joy drawn on
Followed thy children to the women's bowers.
Now she which had our worship in thy stead,
Ere she beheld thy chariot-yoke of sons,
Aye upon Jason turned her yearning gaze.
But then before her eyes she cast her veil,
And swept aback the scorn of her white neck,
Loathing thy sons' approach; but now thy lord,
To turn the maiden's wrath and spite aside,
Thus spake: "Nay, be not hostile to thy friends:
Cease from thine anger, turn thine head again,
Accounting friends whomso thy spouse accounts.
Their gifts receive, and plead thou with thy sire

φυγὰς ἀφεῖναι παισὶ τοῖσδ', ἐμὴν χάριν ;
ἡ δ' ὡς ἐσεῖδε κόσμον, οὐκ ἠνέσχετο,
ἀλλ' ᾔνεσ' ἀνδρὶ πάντα· καὶ πρὶν ἐκ δόμων
μακρὰν ἀπεῖναι πατέρα καὶ παῖδας σέθεν,
λαβοῦσα πέπλους ποικίλους ἠμπίσχετο,
χρυσοῦν τε θεῖσα στέφανον ἀμφὶ βοστρύχοις
λαμπρῷ κατόπτρῳ σχηματίζεται κόμην,
ἄψυχον εἰκὼ προσγελῶσα σώματος.
κἄπειτ' ἀναστᾶσ' ἐκ θρόνων διέρχεται
στέγας, ἁβρὸν βαίνουσα παλλεύκῳ ποδί,
δώροις ὑπερχαίρουσα, πολλὰ πολλάκις
τένοντ' ἐς ὀρθὸν ὄμμασι σκοπουμένη.
τοὐνθένδε μέντοι δεινὸν ἦν θέαμ' ἰδεῖν·
χροιὰν γὰρ ἀλλάξασα λεχρία πάλιν
χωρεῖ τρέμουσα κῶλα, καὶ μόλις φθάνει
θρόνοισιν ἐμπεσοῦσα μὴ χαμαὶ πεσεῖν.
καί τις γεραιὰ προσπόλων, δόξασά που
ἢ Πανὸς ὀργὰς ἤ τινος θεῶν μολεῖν,
ἀνωλόλυξε, πρίν γ' ὁρᾷ διὰ στόμα
χωροῦντα λευκὸν ἀφρόν, ὀμμάτων τ' ἄπο
κόρας στρέφουσαν, αἷμά τ' οὐκ ἐνὸν χροΐ·
εἶτ' ἀντίμολπον ἧκεν ὀλολυγῆς μέγαν
κωκυτόν. εὐθὺς δ' ἡ μὲν εἰς πατρὸς δόμους
ὥρμησεν, ἡ δὲ πρὸς τὸν ἀρτίως πόσιν,
φράσουσα νύμφης συμφοράς· ἅπασα δὲ
στέγη πυκνοῖσιν ἐκτύπει δρομήμασιν.
ἤδη δ' ἂν ἕλκων κῶλον ἐκπλέθρου δρόμου
ταχὺς βαδιστὴς τερμόνων ἀνθήπτετο·
ἡ δ' ἐξ ἀναύδου καὶ μύσαντος ὄμματος
δεινὸν στενάξασ' ἡ τάλαιν' ἠγείρετο·
διπλοῦν γὰρ αὐτῇ πῆμ' ἐπεστρατεύετο.
χρυσοῦς μὲν ἀμφὶ κρατὶ κείμενος πλόκος

To pardon these their exile—for my sake."
She, when she saw the attire, could not refrain,
But yielded her lord all. And ere their father
Far from her bower with those thy sons had gone,
She took the rich-wrought robes and clad herself,
Circling her ringlets with the golden crown,
And by a shining mirror ranged her tresses,
Smiling at her own phantom image there.
Then, rising from her seat, adown the halls
She paced with mincing tread of ivory feet,
Exulting in the gifts, and oftentimes
Sweeping her glance from neck to ankle-hem.
But then was there a fearful sight to see.
Suddenly changed her colour : reeling back
With trembling limbs she goes ; and scarce in time
Drops on the couch to fall not on the ground.
Then a grey handmaid, deeming peradventure
That frenzy was of Pan or some God sent,
Raised the prayer-cry, before she saw the foam
White-frothing from her lips, or marked how rolled
Her eyeballs, and her face's bloodless hue ;
Then a long cry of horror, not of prayer,
She shrilled forth. Straight to her father's chambers one
Darted, and one unto her new-made spouse,
To tell the bride's affliction : all the roof
Echoed with multitudinous-hurrying feet.
And a swift athlete's straining limbs had paced
By this the full length of the furlong course,
When she from trance all speechless of closed eyes
In anguish woke with horrible-shrilling shriek ;
For like two charging hosts her torment came :—
The golden coil about her head that lay

θαυμαστὸν ἵει νᾶμα παμφάγου πυρός·
πέπλοι δὲ λεπτοί, σῶν τέκνων δωρήματα,
λεπτὴν ἔδαπτον σάρκα τῆς δυσδαίμονος.
φεύγει δ' ἀναστᾶσ' ἐκ θρόνων πυρουμένη,
σείουσα χαίτην κρᾶτά τ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλοσε,
ῥῖψαι θέλουσα στέφανον· ἀλλ' ἀραρότως
σύνδεσμα χρυσὸς εἶχε, πῦρ δ', ἐπεὶ κόμην
ἔσεισε, μᾶλλον δὶς τόσως τ' ἐλάμπετο.
πίτνει δ' ἐς οὖδας συμφορᾷ νικωμένη,
πλὴν τῷ τεκόντι κάρτα δυσμαθὴς ἰδεῖν·
οὔτ' ὀμμάτων γὰρ δῆλος ἦν κατάστασις
οὔτ' εὐφυὲς πρόσωπον, αἷμα δ' ἐξ ἄκρου
ἔσταζε κρατὸς συμπεφυρμένον πυρί.
σάρκες δ' ἀπ' ὀστέων ὥστε πεύκινον δάκρυ
γναθμοῖς ἀδήλοις φαρμάκων ἀπέρρεον,
δεινὸν θέαμα· πᾶσι δ' ἦν φόβος θιγεῖν
νεκροῦ· τύχην γὰρ εἴχομεν διδάσκαλον.
πατὴρ δ' ὁ τλήμων συμφορᾶς ἀγνωσίᾳ
ἄφνω παρελθὼν δῶμα προσπίτνει νεκρῷ·
ᾤμωξε δ' εὐθύς, καὶ περιπτύξας δέμας
κυνεῖ προσαυδῶν τοιάδ'· ὦ δύστηνε παῖ,
τίς σ' ὧδ' ἀτίμως δαιμόνων ἀπώλεσε;
τίς τὸν γέροντα τύμβον ὀρφανὸν σέθεν
τίθησιν; οἴμοι, συνθάνοιμί σοι, τέκνον.
ἐπεὶ δὲ θρήνων καὶ γόων ἐπαύσατο,
χρῄζων γεραιὸν ἐξαναστῆσαι δέμας
προσείχεθ' ὥστε κισσὸς ἔρνεσιν δάφνης
λεπτοῖσι πέπλοις, δεινὰ δ' ἦν παλαίσματα·
ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἤθελ' ἐξαναστῆσαι γόνυ,
ἡ δ' ἀντελάζυτ'· εἰ δὲ πρὸς βίαν ἄγοι,
σάρκας γεραιὰς ἐσπάρασσ' ἀπ' ὀστέων.
χρόνῳ δ' ἀπέσβη[1] καὶ μεθῆχ' ὁ δύσμορος

[1] Scaliger: for ἀπέστη.

'Gan spurt a marvellous stream of ravening fire:
The delicate robes, the gift thy children brought,
Had fangs to gnaw her delicate tortured flesh!
Upstarting from her seat she flees, all flame,
Shaking her hair, her head, this way and that,
To cast from her the crown; but firmly fixed
The gold held fast its grip: the fire, whene'er
She shook her locks, with doubled fury blazed.
Then agony-vanquished falls she on the floor,
Marred past all knowledge, save for a father's eyes.
No more was seen her eyes' imperial calm,
No more her comely features; but the gore
Dripped from her head's crown flecked with blended fire.
The flesh-flakes from her bones, like the pine's tears,
'Neath that mysterious drug's devourings melted,—
Dread sight!—and came on all folk fear to touch
The corpse: her hideous fate had we for warning.

But, ignorant of all, her wretched sire,
Suddenly entering, falls upon her corpse,
And straightway wailed and clasped the body round,
And kissed it, crying, "O my hapless child,
What God thus horribly hath thee destroyed?
Who maketh this old sepulchre bereft
Of thee? Ah me, would I might die with thee!"
But when from wailing and from moans he ceased,
Fain would he have upraised his aged frame,
Yet clave, as ivy clings to laurel boughs,
To the filmy robes: then was a ghastly wrestling;
For, while he strained to upraise his knee, she seemed
To upwrithe and grip him: if by force he haled,
Torn from the very bones was his old flesh.
Life's light at last quenched, he gave up the ghost,

ψυχήν· κακοῦ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ἦν ὑπέρτερος.
κεῖνται δὲ νεκροὶ παῖς τε καὶ γέρων πατὴρ
πέλας, ποθεινὴ δακρύοισι συμφορά.
καί μοι τὸ μὲν σὸν ἐκποδὼν ἔστω λόγου·
γνώσει γὰρ αὐτὴ ζημίας ἀποστροφήν.
τὰ θνητὰ δ' οὐ νῦν πρῶτον ἡγοῦμαι σκιάν,
οὐδ' ἂν τρέσας εἴποιμι τοὺς σοφοὺς βροτῶν
δοκοῦντας εἶναι καὶ μεριμνητὰς λόγων,
τούτους μεγίστην ζημίαν ὀφλισκάνειν.
θνητῶν γὰρ οὐδείς ἐστιν εὐδαίμων ἀνήρ·
ὄλβου δ' ἐπιρρυέντος εὐτυχέστερος
ἄλλου γένοιτ' ἂν ἄλλος, εὐδαίμων δ' ἂν οὔ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔοιχ' ὁ δαίμων πολλὰ τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
κακὰ ξυνάπτειν ἐνδίκως Ἰάσονι.
ὦ τλῆμον, ὥς σου συμφορὰς οἰκτείρομεν,
κόρη Κρέοντος, ἥτις εἰς Ἅιδου δόμους
οἴχει γάμων ἕκατι τῶν Ἰάσονος.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

φίλαι, δέδοκται τοὔργον ὡς τάχιστά μοι
παῖδας κτανούσῃ τῆσδ' ἀφορμᾶσθαι χθονός,
καὶ μὴ σχολὴν ἄγουσαν ἐκδοῦναι τέκνα
ἄλλῃ φονεῦσαι δυσμενεστέρᾳ χερί.
πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν· ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή,
ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν, οἵπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν.
ἀλλ' εἶ' ὁπλίζου, καρδία. τί μέλλομεν
τὰ δεινὰ κἀναγκαῖα μὴ πράσσειν κακά;
ἄγ', ὦ τάλαινα χεὶρ ἐμή, λαβὲ ξίφος,
λάβ', ἕρπε πρὸς βαλβῖδα λυπηρὰν βίου,
καὶ μὴ κακισθῇς μηδ' ἀναμνησθῇς τέκνων,
ὡς φίλταθ', ὡς ἔτικτες· ἀλλὰ τήνδε γε
λαθοῦ βραχεῖαν ἡμέραν παίδων σέθεν,

Ill-starred, down-sinking 'neath destruction's sea.
There lie the corpses, child by grey old sire
Clasped ;—such affliction tears, not words, must mourn.
And of thy part no word be said by me :—
Thyself from punishment wilt find escape.
But man's lot now, as oft, I count a shadow,
Nor fear to say that such as seem to be
In wit most keen of men, most subtle of speech,
Even these pay heaviest penalty of all ;
For among mortals happy man is none.
In fortune's flood-tide might a man become
More prosperous than his neighbour : happy ?—no !
[*Exit.*

CHORUS

Fortune, meseems, with many an ill this day
Doth compass Jason,—yea, and rightfully.
But O the pity of thy calamity,
Daughter of Creon, who to Hades' halls
Hast passed, because with thee would Jason wed !

MEDEA

Friends, my resolve is taken, with all speed
To slay my children, and to flee this land,
And not to linger and to yield my sons
To death by other hands more merciless.
They needs must die : and, since it needs must be,
Even I will give them death, who gave them life.
Up, gird thee for the fray, mine heart ! Why loiter
To do the dread ill deeds that must be done ?
Come, wretched hand of mine, grasp thou the sword ;
Grasp !—on to the starting-point of a blasted life !
Oh, turn not craven !—think not on thy babes,
How dear they are, how thou didst bear them : nay,
For this short day do thou forget thy sons,

κἄπειτα θρήνει. καὶ γὰρ εἰ κτενεῖς σφ', ὅμως
φίλοι γ' ἔφυσαν—δυστυχὴς δ' ἐγὼ γυνή.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ Γᾶ τε καὶ παμφαὴς στρ.
ἀκτὶς 'Αελίου, κατίδετ' ἴδετε τὰν
ὀλομέναν γυναῖκα, πρὶν φοινίαν
τέκνοις προσβαλεῖν χέρ' αὐτοκτόνον·
σᾶς γὰρ ἀπὸ χρυσέας γονᾶς
ἔβλαστεν, θεοῦ δ' αἷματι πίτνειν
φόβος ὑπ' ἀνέρων.
ἀλλά νιν, φάος διογενές, κάτειρ-
γε, κατάπαυσον, ἔξελ' οἴκων τάλαι-
ναν φονίαν τ' 'Ερινὺν ὑπ' ἀλαστόρων.

μάταν μόχθος ἔρρει τέκνων, ἀντ.
ἆρα μάταν γένος φίλιον ἔτεκες, ὦ
κυανεᾶν λιποῦσα Συμπληγάδων
πετρᾶν ἀξενωτάταν εἰσβολάν.
δειλαία, τί σοι φρενῶν βαρὺς
χόλος προσπίτνει καὶ δυσμενὴς
φόνος ἀμείβεται;
χαλεπὰ γὰρ βροτοῖς ὁμογενῆ μιά-
σματ' † ἐπὶ γαῖαν αὐτοφόνταις συνῳ-
δὰ θεόθεν πίτνοντ' ἐπὶ δόμοις ἄχη. †

Thereafter mourn them. For, although thou slay,
Yet dear they are, and I—am wretched, wretched!

[*Exit* MEDEA.

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

O Earth, O all-revealing splendour
Of the Sun, look down on a woman accurst,
Or ever she slake the murder-thirst
Of a mother whose hands would smite the tender
Fruit of her womb.
Look down, for she sprang of thy lineage golden:
Man's vengeance threatens—thy seed are holden
'Neath the shadow of doom!
But thou, O heaven-begotten glory,
Restrain her, refrain her: the wretched, the gory
Erinys by demons dogged, we implore thee,
Snatch thou from yon home!

(*Ant.*)

For naught was the childbirth-travail wasted;
For naught didst thou bear them, the near and the dear,
O thou who hast fled through the Pass of Fear,
From the dark-blue Clashing Crags who hast hasted
Speeding thy flight!
Alas for her!—wherefore hath grim wrath stirred her
Through depths of her soul, that ruthless murder
Her wrongs must requite?
For stern upon mortals the vengeance falleth
For kin's blood spilt; from the earth it calleth,
A voice from the Gods, and the slayers appalleth
On whose homes it shall light.

ΠΑΙΣ α´

οἴμοι, τί δράσω; ποῖ φύγω μητρὸς χέρας;

ΠΑΙΣ β´

οὐκ οἶδ', ἀδελφὲ φίλτατ'· ὀλλύμεσθα γάρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀκούεις βοὰν ἀκούεις τέκνων;
ἰὼ τλᾶμον, ὦ κακοτυχὲς γύναι.
παρέλθω δόμους; ἀρῆξαι φόνον
δοκεῖ μοι τέκνοις.

ΠΑΙΣ α´

ναί, πρὸς θεῶν, ἀρήξατ'· ἐν δέοντι γάρ.

ΠΑΙΣ β´

ὡς ἐγγὺς ἤδη γ' ἐσμὲν ἀρκύων ξίφους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάλαιν', ὡς ἄρ' ἦσθα πέτρος ἢ σίδα-
ρος, ἅτις τέκνων ὃν ἔτεκες
ἄροτον αὐτόχειρι μοίρᾳ κτενεῖς.
μίαν δὴ κλύω μίαν τῶν πάρος
γυναῖκ' ἐν φίλοις χέρα βαλεῖν τέκνοις,
Ἰνὼ μανεῖσαν ἐκ θεῶν, ὅθ' ἡ Διὸς
δάμαρ νιν ἐξέπεμψε δωμάτων ἄλῃ.
πίτνει δ' ἁ τάλαιν' ἐς ἅλμαν φόνῳ
τέκνων δυσσεβεῖ,
ἀκτῆς ὑπερτείνασα ποντίας πόδα,
δυοῖν τε παίδοιν συνθανοῦσ' ἀπόλλυται.

[CHILDREN'S *cries behind the scenes*]

CHILD I

What shall I do?—how flee my mother's hands?

CHILD 2

I know not, dearest brother. Death is here!

CHORUS

Ah the cry!—dost thou hear it?—the children's cry!
Wretch!—woman of cursèd destiny!
Shall I enter? My heart crieth, "Rescue the children from murder nigh!"

[*They beat at the barred doors.*

CHILD I

Help!—for the Gods' sake help! Sore is our need!

CHILD 2

The sword's death-net is closing round us now!

[*Silence within. Blood flows out beneath the door. The women shrink back.*]

CHORUS

Wretch! of what rock is thy breast?—of what steel is the heart of thee moulded,
That the babes thou hast borne, with the selfsame hands that with love have enfolded
These, thou hast set thee to slay?
Of one have I heard that laid hands on her loved ones of old, one only,
Even Ino distraught of the Gods, when Zeus' bride drave her, lonely
And lost, from her home to stray;
And she fell—ah wretch!—on the brink as she stood
Of the sea-scaur: guilt of children's blood
Dragged downwards her feet to the salt sea-flood,
And she died with her children twain.

τί δῆτ' οὖν γένοιτ' ἂν ἔτι δεινόν ; ὦ
γυναικῶν λέχος πολύπονον
ὅσα βροτοῖς ἔρεξας ἤδη κακά.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

γυναῖκες αἳ τῆσδ' ἐγγὺς ἕστατε στέγης,
ἆρ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἡ τὰ δείν' εἰργασμένη
Μήδεια τοισίδ', ἢ μεθέστηκεν φυγῇ ;
δεῖ γάρ νιν ἤτοι γῆς σφε κρυφθῆναι κάτω,
ἢ πτηνὸν ἆραι σῶμ' ἐς αἰθέρος βάθος,
εἰ μὴ τυράννων δώμασιν δώσει δίκην.
πέποιθ' ἀποκτείνασα κοιράνους χθονὸς
ἀθῷος αὐτὴ τῶνδε φεύξεσθαι δόμων ;
ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτῆς φροντίδ' ὡς τέκνων ἔχω·
κείνην μὲν οὓς ἔδρασεν ἔρξουσιν κακῶς,
ἐμῶν δὲ παίδων ἦλθον ἐκσώσων βίον,
μή μοί τι δράσωσ' οἱ προσήκοντες γένει,
μητρῷον ἐκπράσσοντες ἀνόσιον φόνον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ τλῆμον, οὐκ οἶσθ' οἶ κακῶν ἐλήλυθας,
Ἰᾶσον· οὐ γὰρ τούσδ' ἂν ἐφθέγξω λόγους.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

τί δ' ἔστιν ; ἦ που κἄμ' ἀποκτεῖναι θέλει ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παῖδες τεθνᾶσι χειρὶ μητρῴᾳ σέθεν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οἴμοι τί λέξεις ; ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας, γύναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὡς οὐκέτ' ὄντων σῶν τέκνων φρόντιζε δή.

What ghastlier horror remains to be wrought?
O bride-bed of women, with anguish fraught,
What scathe upon mortals ere now hast thou brought,
What manifold bane!

Enter JASON, *with* SERVANTS.

JASON

Women, which stand anear unto this roof—
Is she within the halls, she who hath wrought
Dread deeds, Medea, or in flight passed thence?
For either must she hide her 'neath the earth,
Or lift on wings her frame to heaven's far depths,
Or taste the vengeance of a royal house.
How, trusts she, having murdered the land's lords,
Scatheless herself from these halls forth to flee?
Yet not for her care I, but for my sons.
Whom she hath wronged shall recompense her wrong:
But I to save my children's life am come,
Lest to my grief the kinsmen of the dead
Avenge on them their mother's impious murder.

CHORUS

Wretch, thou know'st not how deep thou art whelmed in woe,
Jason, or thou hadst uttered not such words.

JASON

What now?—and is she fain to slay me too?

CHORUS

Thy sons are dead, slain by the mother's hand.

JASON

Ah me!—what say'st thou?—thou hast killed me, woman!

CHORUS

Thy children are no more: so think of them.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ποῦ γάρ νιν ἔκτειν', ἐντὸς ἢ ἔξωθεν δόμων ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πύλας ἀνοίξας σῶν τέκνων ὄψει φόνον.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

χαλᾶτε κλῇδας ὡς τάχιστα, πρόσπολοι,
ἐκλύεθ' ἁρμούς, ὡς ἴδω διπλοῦν κακόν,
τοὺς μὲν θανόντας, τὴν δὲ τίσωμαι φόνῳ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί τάσδε κινεῖς κἀναμοχλεύεις πύλας,
νεκροὺς ἐρευνῶν κἀμὲ τὴν εἰργασμένην ;
παῦσαι πόνου τοῦδ'· εἰ δ' ἐμοῦ χρείαν ἔχεις,
λέγ' εἴ τι βούλει, χειρὶ δ' οὐ ψαύσεις ποτέ.
τοιόνδ' ὄχημα πατρὸς Ἥλιος πατὴρ
δίδωσιν ἡμῖν, ἔρυμα πολεμίας χερός.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ὦ μῖσος, ὦ μέγιστον ἐχθίστη γύναι
θεοῖς τε κἀμοὶ παντί τ' ἀνθρώπων γένει,
ἥτις τέκνοισι σοῖσιν ἐμβαλεῖν ξίφος
ἔτλης τεκοῦσα κἄμ' ἄπαιδ' ἀπώλεσας·
καὶ ταῦτα δράσασ' ἥλιόν τε προσβλέπεις
καὶ γαῖαν, ἔργον τλᾶσα δυσσεβέστατον.
ὄλοι'· ἐγὼ δὲ νῦν φρονῶ, τότ' οὐ φρονῶν
ὅτ' ἐκ δόμων σε βαρβάρου τ' ἀπὸ χθονὸς
Ἕλλην' ἐς οἶκον ἠγόμην, κακὸν μέγα,
πατρός τε καὶ γῆς προδότιν ἥ σ' ἐθρέψατο.
τὸν σὸν δ' ἀλάστορ' εἰς ἔμ' ἔσκηψαν θεοί·
κτανοῦσα γὰρ δὴ σὸν κάσιν παρέστιον,
τὸ καλλίπρῳρον εἰσέβης Ἀργοῦς σκάφος.
ἤρξω μὲν ἐκ τοιῶνδε· νυμφευθεῖσα δὲ

JASON

How?—slew them? Where?—within, without, the
halls?

CHORUS (*pointing to pavement before doors*)

Open, and thou shalt see thy children's corpses.

JASON

Burst in the bolts with all speed, serving-men—
Force hinges!—let me see this twofold horror,—
The dead, and her,—and in her blood avenge me!

MEDEA *appears above the palace roof in a chariot drawn by dragons.*

MEDEA

Why shakest thou these doors and wouldst unbar,
Seeking thy dead and me who wrought the deed?
Cease this essay. If thou wouldst aught of me,
Say what thou wilt: thine hand shall touch me never.
Such chariot hath my father's sire, the Sun,
Given me, a defence from foeman's hand.

JASON

O thing abhorred! O woman hatefullest
To Gods, to me, to all the race of men,
Thou that couldst thrust the sword into the babes
Thou bar'st, and me hast made a childless ruin!
Thus hast thou wrought, yet look'st thou on the sun
And earth, who hast dared a deed most impious?
Now ruin seize thee!—clear I see, who saw not
Then, when from halls and land barbarian
To a Greek home I bare thee, utter bane,
Traitress to sire and land that nurtured thee!
Thy guilt's curse-bolt on me the Gods have launched;
For thine own brother by his hearth thou slewest
Ere thou didst enter fair-prowed Argo's hull.
With such deeds thou begannest. Wedded then

παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδε καὶ τεκοῦσά μοι τέκνα,
εὐνῆς ἕκατι καὶ λέχους σφ' ἀπώλεσας.
οὐκ ἔστιν ἥτις τοῦτ' ἂν Ἑλληνὶς γυνὴ
ἔτλη ποθ', ὧν γε πρόσθεν ἠξίουν ἐγὼ
γῆμαί σε, κῆδος ἐχθρὸν ὀλέθριόν τ' ἐμοί,
λέαιναν, οὐ γυναῖκα, τῆς Τυρσηνίδος
Σκύλλης ἔχουσαν ἀγριωτέραν φύσιν.
ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἄν σε μυρίοις ὀνείδεσι
δάκοιμι· τοιόνδ' ἐμπέφυκέ σοι θράσος·
ἔρρ', αἰσχροποιὲ καὶ τέκνων μιαιφόνε.
ἐμοὶ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν δαίμον' αἰάζειν πάρα,
ὃς οὔτε λέκτρων νεογάμων ὀνήσομαι,
οὐ παῖδας οὓς ἔφυσα κἀξεθρεψάμην
ἕξω προσειπεῖν ζῶντας, ἀλλ' ἀπώλεσα.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μακρὰν ἂν ἐξέτεινα τοῖσδ' ἐναντίον
λόγοισιν, εἰ μὴ Ζεὺς πατὴρ ἠπίστατο
οἷ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ πέπονθας οἷά τ' εἰργάσω·
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἔμελλες τἄμ' ἀτιμάσας λέχη
τερπνὸν διάξειν βίοτον ἐγγελῶν ἐμοί,
οὐδ' ἡ τύραννος οὐδ' ὁ σοὶ προσθεὶς γάμους
Κρέων ἀνατὶ τῆσδέ μ' ἐκβαλεῖν χθονός.
πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ λέαιναν, εἰ βούλει, κάλει
καὶ Σκύλλαν ᾗ Τυρσηνὸν ᾤκησεν πέδον·†[1]
τῆς σῆς γὰρ ὡς χρὴ καρδίας ἀνθηψάμην.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

καὐτή γε λυπεῖ καὶ κακῶν κοινωνὸς εἶ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σάφ' ἴσθι· λύει δ' ἄλγος, ἢν σὺ μὴ 'γγελᾷς.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ὦ τέκνα, μητρὸς ὡς κακῆς ἐκύρσατε.

[1] Reading doubtful: σπέος and πόρον have been proposed.

To this man, and the mother of my sons,
For wedlock-right's sake hast thou murdered them.
There is no Grecian woman that had dared
This :—yet I stooped to marry thee, good sooth,
Rather than these, a hateful bride and fell,
A tigress, not a woman, harbouring
A fiercer nature than Tyrrhenian Scylla.
But—for untold revilings would not sting
Thee, in thy nature is such hardihood :—
Avaunt, thou miscreant stained with thy babes' blood!
For me remains to wail my destiny,
Who of my new-wed bride shall have no joy,
And to the sons whom I begat and nurtured
Living I shall not speak—lost, lost to me!

MEDEA

I might have lengthened out long controversy
To these thy words, if Father Zeus knew not
How I have dealt with thee and thou with me.
'Twas not for thee to set my rights at naught,
And live a life of bliss, bemocking me,
Nor for thy princess, and thy marriage-kinsman,
Creon, unscathed to banish me this land!
Wherefore a tigress call me, an thou wilt,
Or Scylla, haunter of Tyrrhenian shore ;
For thine heart have I wrung, as well behoved.

JASON

Ha, but thou sorrowest too, dost share mine ills!

MEDEA

O yea : yet grief is gain, so thou laugh not.

JASON

O children mine, what miscreant mother had ye!

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ παῖδες, ὡς ὤλεσθε πατρῴᾳ νόσῳ.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οὔτοι νυν ἡμὴ δεξιά σφ' ἀπώλεσεν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀλλ' ὕβρις οἵ τε σοὶ νεοδμῆτες γάμοι.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

λέχους σφέ γ' ἠξίωσας εἵνεκα κτανεῖν ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σμικρὸν γυναικὶ πῆμα τοῦτ' εἶναι δοκεῖς ;

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἥτις γε σώφρων· σοὶ δὲ πάντ' ἐστὶν κακά.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οἵδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσί· τοῦτο γάρ σε δήξεται.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οἵδ' εἰσίν, οἴμοι, σῷ κάρᾳ μιάστορες.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἴσασιν ὅστις ἦρξε πημονῆς θεοί.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἴσασι δῆτα σήν γ' ἀπόπτυστον φρένα.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

στυγεῖ· πικρὰν δὲ βάξιν ἐχθαίρω σέθεν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σήν· ῥᾴδιοι δ' ἀπαλλαγαί.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πῶς οὖν ; τί δράσω ; κάρτα γὰρ κἀγὼ θέλω.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

θάψαι νεκρούς μοι τούσδε καὶ κλαῦσαι πάρες.

MEDEA

O sons, destroyed by your own father's lust!

JASON

Sooth, 'twas no hand of mine that murdered them.

MEDEA

Nay, but thine insolence and thy new-forged bonds.

JASON

How, claim the right for wedlock's sake to slay them!

MEDEA

A light affliction count'st thou this to a wife?

JASON

A virtuous wife:—in *thy* sight naught were good!

MEDEA

These live no more: this, this shall cut thine heart!

JASON

They live—ah me!—avengers on thine head.

MEDEA

The Gods know who began this misery.

JASON

Yea, verily, thy spirit abhorred they know.

MEDEA

Abhorred art thou: I loathe thy bitter tongue.

JASON

And I thine:—yet were mutual riddance easy.

MEDEA

How then?—what shall I do?—fain would I this.

JASON

Yield me my dead to bury and bewail.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ σφᾶς τῇδ' ἐγὼ θάψω χερί,
φέρουσ' ἐς Ἥρας τέμενος Ἀκραίας θεοῦ,
ὡς μή τις αὐτοὺς πολεμίων καθυβρίσῃ,
τύμβους ἀνασπῶν· γῇ δὲ τῇδε Σισύφου
σεμνὴν ἑορτὴν καὶ τέλη προσάψομεν
τὸ λοιπὸν ἀντὶ τοῦδε δυσσεβοῦς φόνου.
αὐτὴ δὲ γαῖαν εἶμι τὴν Ἐρεχθέως,
Αἰγεῖ συνοικήσουσα τῷ Πανδίονος.
σὺ δ', ὥσπερ εἰκός, κατθανεῖ κακὸς κακῶς,
Ἀργοῦς κάρα σὸν λειψάνῳ πεπληγμένος,
πικρὰς τελευτὰς τῶν νέων[1] *γάμων ἰδών.*

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἀλλά σ' Ἐρινὺς ὀλέσειε τέκνων
φονία τε Δίκη.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τίς δὲ κλύει σου θεὸς ἢ δαίμων,
τοῦ ψευδόρκου καὶ ξειναπάτου;

ΙΑΣΩΝ

φεῦ φεῦ, μυσαρὰ καὶ παιδολέτορ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

στεῖχε πρὸς οἴκους καὶ θάπτ' ἄλοχον.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

στείχω, δισσῶν γ' ἄμορος τέκνων.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὔπω θρηνεῖς· μένε καὶ γῆρας.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ὦ τέκνα φίλτατα.

[1] Weil: for MS. *ἐμῶν*.

MEDEA

Never: with this hand will I bury them,
To Mountain Hera's precinct bearing them,
That never foe may do despite to them,
Rifling their tomb. This land of Sisyphus
Will I constrain with solemn festival
And rites to atone for this unhallowed murder.
But I—I go unto Erechtheus' land,
With Aegeus to abide, Pandion's son.
Thou, as is meet, foul wretch, shalt foully die,
By Argo's wreckage smitten on the skull,
Who hast seen this new bridal's bitter ending.

JASON

Now the Fury-avenger of children smite thee,
And Justice that looketh on murder requite thee!

MEDEA

What God or what spirit will heed thy request,
Caitiff forsworn, who betrayest the guest?

JASON

Avaunt, foul thing by whose deed thy children have died!

MEDEA

Go hence to thine halls, thence lead to the grave thy bride!

JASON

I go, a father forlorn of the two sons reft from his home!

MEDEA

Not yet dost thou truly mourn: abide till thine old age come.

JASON

O children beloved above all!

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μητρί γε, σοὶ δ' οὔ.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

κἄπειτ' ἔκανες;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σέ γε πημαίνουσ'.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ὤμοι, φιλίου χρῄζω στόματος
παίδων ὁ τάλας προσπτύξασθαι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

νῦν σφε προσαυδᾷς, νῦν ἀσπάζει,
τότ' ἀπωσάμενος.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

δός μοι πρὸς θεῶν
μαλακοῦ χρωτὸς ψαῦσαι τέκνων.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐκ ἔστι· μάτην ἔπος ἔρριπται.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

Ζεῦ, τάδ' ἀκούεις ὡς ἀπελαυνόμεθ',
οἷά τε πάσχομεν ἐκ τῆς μυσαρᾶς
καὶ παιδοφόνου τῆσδε λεαίνης;
ἀλλ' ὁπόσον γοῦν πάρα καὶ δύναμαι
τάδε καὶ θρηνῶ κἀπιθεάζω,
μαρτυρόμενος δαίμονας ὥς μοι
τέκνα κτείνασ' ἀποκωλύεις
ψαῦσαί τε χεροῖν θάψαι τε νεκρούς,
οὓς μήποτ' ἐγὼ φύσας ὄφελον
πρὸς σοῦ φθιμένους ἐπιδέσθαι.

MEDEA

Of their mother beloved, not of thee.

JASON

Yet she slew them!

MEDEA

That thou mightest fall in the net that
thou spreadest for me.

JASON

Woe's me! I yearn with my lips to press
My sons' dear lips in my wretchedness.

MEDEA

Ha, now art thou calling upon them, now wouldst
thou kiss,
Who rejectedst them then?

JASON

For the Gods' sake grant me but this,
The sweet soft flesh of my children to feel!

MEDEA

No—wasted in air is all thine appeal.

JASON

O Zeus, dost thou hear it, how spurned I am?—
What outrage I suffer of yonder abhorred
Child-murderess, yonder tigress-dam?
Yet out of mine helplessness, out of my shame,
I bewail my belovèd, I call to record
High heaven, I bid God witness the word,
That my sons thou hast slain, and withholdest
me,
That mine hands may not touch them, nor bury
their clay!
Would God I had gotten them never, this day
To behold them destroyed of thee!

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλῶν ταμίας Ζεὺς ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ,
πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκήτων πόρον ηὗρε θεός.
τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

CHORUS

All dooms be of Zeus in Olympus ; 'tis his to reveal
them.
Manifold things unhoped-for the Gods to accomplishment bring.
And the things that we looked for, the Gods deign
not to fulfil them ;
And the paths undiscerned of our eyes, the Gods
unseal them.
So fell this marvellous thing.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.

ALCESTIS

ARGUMENT

Apollo, being banished for a season from Olympus, and condemned to do service to a mortal, became herdman of Admetus, King of Pherae in Thessaly. Yet he loathed not his earthly taskmaster, but loved him, for that he was a just man, and hospitable exceedingly. Wherefore he obtained from the Fates this boon for Admetus, that, when his hour of death should come, they should accept in ransom for his life the life of whosoever should have before consented to die in his stead. Now when this was made known, none of them which were nearest by blood to the king would promise to be his ransom in that day. Then Alcestis his wife, the daughter of Pelias King of Iolcos, pledged her to die for him. Of her love she did it, and for the honour of wifehood. And the years passed by, and the tale was told in many lands; and all men praised Alcestis, but Admetus bore a burden of sorrow, for day by day she became dearer to him, a wife wholly true, a mother most loving, and a lady to her thralls gentle exceedingly. But when it was known by tokens that the day was come, Admetus repented him sorely, but it availed not, for no mortal may recall a pledge once given to the Gods. And on that day there came to the palace Apollo to plead with Death for Alcestis' sake; and a company of Elders of Pherae, to ask of her state and to make mourning for her. And when she was dead, ere she was borne forth to burial, came Hercules, son of Zeus, in his journeying, seeking the guest's right of meat and lodging, but not knowing aught of that which had come to pass. Of him was a great deliverance wrought, which is told herein.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ
ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ
ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ΕΥΜΗΛΟΣ
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ΦΕΡΗΣ
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

APOLLO.

DEATH.

CHORUS, *composed of Elders of Pherae.*

HANDMAID.

ALCESTIS, *daughter of Pelias, and wife of Admetus.*

ADMETUS, *King of Pherae.*

EUMELUS, *son of Admetus and Alcestis.*

HERCULES.

PHERES, *father of Admetus.*

SERVANT, *steward of the palace.*

Guards, attendants, handmaids, and mourners.

The scene throughout is in front of the palace of Admetus at Pherae.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

Ὦ δώματ' Ἀδμήτει', ἐν οἷς ἔτλην ἐγὼ
θῆσσαν τράπεζαν αἰνέσαι θεός περ ὤν.
Ζεὺς γὰρ κατακτὰς παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν αἴτιος
Ἀσκληπιόν, στέρνοισιν ἐμβαλὼν φλόγα·
οὗ δὴ χολωθεὶς τέκτονας Δίου πυρὸς
κτείνω Κύκλωπας· καί με θητεύειν πατὴρ
θνητῷ παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῶνδ' ἄποιν' ἠνάγκασεν.
ἐλθὼν δὲ γαῖαν τήνδ' ἐβουφόρβουν ξένῳ,
καὶ τόνδ' ἔσῳζον οἶκον ἐς τόδ' ἡμέρας.
ὁσίου γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ὅσιος ὢν ἐτύγχανον,
παιδὸς Φέρητος, ὃν θανεῖν ἐρρυσάμην,
Μοίρας δολώσας· ᾔνεσαν δέ μοι θεαὶ
Ἄδμητον ᾅδην τὸν παραυτίκ' ἐκφυγεῖν,
ἄλλον διαλλάξαντα τοῖς κάτω νεκρόν.
πάντας δ' ἐλέγξας καὶ διεξελθὼν φίλους,
πατέρα γεραιάν θ' ἥ σφ' ἔτικτε μητέρα,
οὐχ ηὗρε πλὴν γυναικὸς ὅστις ἤθελε
θανεῖν πρὸ κείνου μηδ' ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν φάος·
ἣ νῦν κατ' οἴκους ἐν χεροῖν βαστάζεται
ψυχορραγοῦσα· τῇδε γάρ σφ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
θανεῖν πέπρωται καὶ μεταστῆναι βίου.
ἐγω δέ, μὴ μίασμά μ' ἐν δόμοις κίχῃ,
λείπω μελάθρων τῶνδε φιλτάτην στέγην.
ἤδη δὲ τόνδε Θάνατον εἰσορῶ πέλας,

ALCESTIS

Enter APOLLO.

APOLLO

HALLS of Admetus, hail! I stooped my pride
Here to brook fare of serfs, yea I, a God!
The fault was fault of Zeus: he slew my son
Asclepius—hurled the levin through his heart.
Wroth for the dead, his smiths of heavenly fire,
The Cyclopes, I slew; for blood-atonement
Allfather made me serf to a mortal man

To this land came I, tended mine host's kine,
And warded still his house unto this day.
Righteous myself, I found a righteous man,
The son of Pheres: him I snatched from death,
Cozening the Fates: the Sisters promised me—
"Admetus shall escape the imminent death
If he for ransom gives another life."
To all he went—all near and dear,—and asked
Father and grey-haired mother who gave him life;
But, save his wife, found none that would consent
For him to die and never more see light.
Now in his arms upborne within yon home
She gaspeth forth her life: for on this day
Her weird it is to die and fleet from life.
I, lest pollution taint me in their house,
Go forth of yonder hall's belovèd roof. [*Enter* DEATH.
Lo, yonder Death;—I see him nigh at hand,

ἱερῆ θανόντων, ὅς νιν εἰς Ἅιδου δόμους
μέλλει κατάξειν· συμμέτρως δ' ἀφίκετο,
φρουρῶν τόδ' ἦμαρ ᾧ θανεῖν αὐτὴν χρεών.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

ἆ ἆ·
τί σὺ πρὸς μελάθροις; τί σὺ τῇδε πολεῖς,
Φοῖβ'; ἀδικεῖς αὖ τιμὰς ἐνέρων
ἀφοριζόμενος καὶ καταπαύων.
οὐκ ἤρκεσέ σοι μόρον Ἀδμήτου
διακωλῦσαι, Μοίρας δολίῳ
σφήλαντι τέχνῃ; νῦν δ' ἐπὶ τῇδ' αὖ
χέρα τοξήρη φρουρεῖς ὁπλίσας,
ἣ τόδ' ὑπέστη πόσιν ἐκλύσασ'
αὐτὴ προθανεῖν Πελίου παῖς.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

θάρσει· δίκην τοι καὶ λόγους κεδνοὺς ἔχω.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

τί δῆτα τόξων ἔργον, εἰ δίκην ἔχεις;

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

σύνηθες ἀεὶ ταῦτα βαστάζειν ἐμοί.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

καὶ τοῖσδέ γ' οἴκοις ἐκδίκως προσωφελεῖν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

φίλου γὰρ ἀνδρὸς συμφοραῖς βαρύνομαι.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

καὶ νοσφιεῖς με τοῦδε δευτέρου νεκροῦ;

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐκεῖνον πρὸς βίαν σ' ἀφειλόμην.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

πῶς οὖν ὑπὲρ γῆς ἐστι κοὐ κάτω χθονός;

Priest of the dead, who comes to hale her down
To Hades' halls —well hath he kept his time,
Watching this day, whereon she needs must die.

DEATH

Ha, thou at the palace! Wilt not make room,
Phoebus?—thou wrestest the right yet again:
Thou removest the landmarks of Gods of Gloom,
And thou makest their honours vain.
Did this not suffice thee, to thwart that doom
Of Admetus, when, all by thy cunning beguiled
Were the Fates, that thou now must be warding the wife
With thine hand made ready the bowstring to strain,
Though she pledged her from death to redeem with her life
Her lord,—she, Pelias' child?

APOLLO

Fear not: fair words and justice are with me.

DEATH

Justice with thee!—what needeth then the bow?

APOLLO

This?—'tis my wont to bear it evermore.

DEATH

Yea, and to aid yon house in lawless wise.

APOLLO

Mine heart is heavy for my friend's mischance.

DEATH

What, wilt thou wrest from me this second corpse?

APOLLO

Nay, not that other did I take by force.

DEATH

Not?—why on earth then?—why not underground?

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
δάμαρτ᾽ ἀμείψας, ἣν σὺ νῦν ἥκεις μέτα.
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
κἀπάξομαί γε νερτέραν ὑπὸ χθόνα.
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
λαβὼν ἴθ᾽· οὐ γὰρ οἶδ᾽ ἂν εἰ πείσαιμί σε.
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
κτείνειν γ᾽ ὃν ἂν χρῇ; τοῦτο γὰρ τετάγμεθα.
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
οὔκ, ἀλλὰ τοῖς μέλλουσι θάνατον ἐμβαλεῖν.
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
ἔχω λόγον δὴ καὶ προθυμίαν σέθεν.
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
ἔστ᾽ οὖν ὅπως Ἄλκηστις εἰς γῆρας μόλοι;
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
οὐκ ἔστι· τιμαῖς κἀμὲ τέρπεσθαι δόκει.
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
οὔτοι πλέον γ᾽ ἂν ἢ μίαν ψυχὴν λάβοις.
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
νέων φθινόντων μεῖζον ἄρνυμαι γέρας.
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
κἂν γραῦς ὄληται, πλουσίως ταφήσεται.
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
πρὸς τῶν ἐχόντων, Φοῖβε, τὸν νόμον τίθης.
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
πῶς εἶπας; ἀλλ᾽ ἦ καὶ σοφὸς λέληθας ὤν;
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
ὠνοῖντ᾽ ἂν οὓς πάρεστι γηραιοὺς θανεῖν.
ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
οὔκουν δοκεῖ σοι τήνδε μοι δοῦναι χάριν;
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
οὐ δῆτ᾽· ἐπίστασαι δὲ τοὺς ἐμοὺς τρόπους.

APOLLO

She was his ransom, she for whom thou comest.

DEATH

Yea, and will hale her deep beneath the earth.

APOLLO

Take her and go: I trow I shall not bend thee—

DEATH

To slay the victim due?—mine office this.

APOLLO

Nay, but to smite with death the ripe for death.

DEATH

I grasp thine argument—and thine earnestness!

APOLLO

And may Alcestis never see old age?

DEATH

Never:—should I not love mine honours too?

APOLLO

'Tis soon or late,—thou canst but take one life.

DEATH

Yet mine the goodlier prize when die the young.

APOLLO

Though she die old, rich obsequies still are thine.

DEATH

Lo, Phoebus making laws to shield the rich!

APOLLO

How say'st thou?—thou a sophist unawares!

DEATH

Would wealth not buy the boon of dying old?

APOLLO

So then thou wilt not grant this grace to me?

DEATH

Nay surely—dost not know my wonted way?

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἐχθρούς γε θνητοῖς καὶ θεοῖς στυγουμένους.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν δύναιο πάντ' ἔχειν ἃ μή σε δεῖ.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἦ μὴν σὺ παύσει καίπερ ὠμὸς ὢν ἄγαν·
τοῖος Φέρητος εἶσι πρὸς δόμους ἀνήρ,
Εὐρυσθέως πέμψαντος ἵππειον μέτα
ὄχημα Θρῄκης ἐκ τόπων δυσχειμέρων,
ὃς δὴ ξενωθεὶς τοῖσδ' ἐν Ἀδμήτου δόμοις
βίᾳ γυναῖκα τήνδε σ' ἐξαιρήσεται.
κοὔθ' ἡ παρ' ἡμῶν σοι γενήσεται χάρις
δράσεις θ' ὁμοίως ταῦτ', ἀπεχθήσει τ' ἐμοί.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

πόλλ' ἂν σὺ λέξας οὐδὲν ἂν πλέον λάβοις.
ἡ δ' οὖν γυνὴ κάτεισιν εἰς Ἅιδου δόμους.
στείχω δ' ἐπ' αὐτήν, ὡς κατάρξωμαι ξίφει·
ἱερὸς γὰρ οὗτος τῶν κατὰ χθονὸς θεῶν
ὅτου τόδ' ἔγχος κρατὸς ἁγνίσῃ τρίχα.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

τί ποθ' ἡσυχία πρόσθεν μελάθρων;
τί σεσίγηται δόμος Ἀδμήτου;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ φίλων πέλας οὐδείς,
ὅστις ἂν εἴποι πότερον φθιμένην
βασίλειαν χρὴ πενθεῖν, ἢ ζῶσ'
ἔτι φῶς λεύσσει Πελίου τόδε παῖς
Ἄλκηστις, ἐμοὶ πᾶσί τ' ἀρίστη
δόξασα γυνὴ
πόσιν εἰς αὑτῆς γεγενῆσθαι·

APOLLO

Hateful to mortals this, and loathed of Gods.

DEATH

All things beyond thy rights thou canst not have.

APOLLO

Surely thou shalt forbear, though ruthless thou,
So mighty a man to Pheres' halls shall come,
Sent of Eurystheus forth, the courser-car
From winter-dreary lands of Thrace to bring.
Guest-welcomed in Admetus' palace here,
By force yon woman shall he wrest from thee.
Yea, thou of me shalt have no thank for this,
And yet shalt do it, and shalt have mine hate.

[*Exit* APOLLO.

DEATH

Talk on, talk on : no profit shalt thou win.
This woman down to Hades' halls shall pass.
For her I go : my sword shall seal her ours :
For consecrated to the Nether Gods
Is every head whose hair this sword hath shorn.

[*Exit* DEATH.

Enter CHORUS, *dividing to right and left, so that the sections answer one another till they unite at l.* 112.

HALF-CHORUS 1

What meaneth this hush afront of the hall?
The home of Admetus, why voiceless all?

HALF-CHORUS 2

No friend of the house who should speak of its plight
Is nigh, who should bid that we raise the keen
For the dead, or should tell us that yet on the light
Alcestis looketh, and liveth the Queen,
The daughter of Pelias, noblest, I ween—
Yea, in all men's sight
Most leal to her lord of all wives hath she been.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α′

κλύει τις ἢ στεναγμὸν ἢ *στρ. α′*
χειρῶν κτύπον κατὰ στέγας
ἢ γόον ὡς πεπραγμένων ;
οὐ μὰν οὐδέ τις ἀμφιπόλων
στατίζεται ἀμφὶ πύλας.
εἰ γὰρ μετακύμιος ἄτας,
ὦ Παιάν, φανείης.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β′

οὔ τἂν φθιμένης γ᾽ ἐσιώπων.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α′

νέκυς ἤδη.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β′

οὐ δὴ φροῦδός γ᾽ ἐξ οἴκων.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α′

πόθεν ; οὐκ αὐχῶ. τί σε θαρσύνει ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β′

πῶς ἂν ἔρημον τάφον Ἄδμητος
κεδνῆς ἂν ἔπραξε γυναικός ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α′

πυλῶν πάροιθε δ᾽ οὐκ ὁρῶ *ἀντ. α′*
πηγαῖον ὡς νομίζεται
χέρνιβ᾽ ἐπὶ φθιτῶν πύλαις,
χαίτη τ᾽ οὔτις ἐπὶ προθύροις
τομαῖος, ἃ δὴ νεκύων
πένθει πίτνει· οὐ νεολαία
δουπεῖ χεὶρ γυναικῶν.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β′

καὶ μὴν τόδε κύριον ἦμαρ—

HALF-CHORUS 1

Or hearest thou mourning or sighing (*Str.* 1)
Or beating of hands,
Or the wail of bereaved ones outcrying?
No handmaid stands
At the palace-gate. [bird flying
O Healer, appear for the dying, appear as a bright
'Twixt the surges of fate!

HALF-CHORUS 2

She lives!—were she dead, they had raised the keen.

HALF-CHORUS 1

Nay, a corpse is all that was once a queen.

HALF-CHORUS 2

But not forth of the doors is the death-train gone.

HALF-CHORUS 1

Whence cometh thine hope, which I boast not mine own?

HALF-CHORUS 2

Would the King without pomp of procession have yielded the grave the possession
Of so dear, of so faithful an one?

HALF-CHORUS 1

(*Ant.* 1)
Nor the cup in the gateway appeareth,
From the spring that they bear
To the gate that pollution feareth,
Nor the severed hair
In the porch for the dead,
Which the mourner in bitterness sheareth, neither beating of hands one heareth
On maiden's head.

HALF-CHORUS 2

Yet surely is this the appointed day—

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

τί τόδ' αὐδᾷς ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

ᾧ χρή σφε μολεῖν κατὰ γαίας.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

ἔθιγες ψυχῆς, ἔθιγες δὲ φρενῶν.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

χρὴ τῶν ἀγαθῶν διακναιομένων
πενθεῖν ὅστις
χρηστὸς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς νενόμισται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ναυκληρίαν *στρ. β'*
ἔσθ' ὅποι τις αἴας
στείλας, ἢ Λυκίας
εἴτ' ἐπὶ τὰς ἀνύδρους
'Αμμωνιάδας ἕδρας
δυστάνου παραλῦσαι
ψυχάν· μόρος γὰρ ἀπότομος
πλάθει· θεῶν δ' ἐπ' ἐσχάραις
οὐκ ἔχω ἐπὶ τίνα
μηλοθύταν πορευθῶ.

μόνος δ' ἄν, εἰ φῶς τόδ' ἦν *ἀντ. β'*
ὄμμασιν δεδορκὼς
Φοίβου παῖς, προλιποῦσ'
ἦλθεν ἕδρας σκοτίους
῞Αιδα τε πύλας·

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ah ! what wilt thou say ?

HALF-CHORUS 2

Whereon of her doom she must pass to the tomb.

HALF-CHORUS 1

With a keen pang's smart hast thou stabbed mine heart.

HALF-CHORUS 2

It is meet, when the good are as flowers plucked away,
That in sorrow's gloom
Should the breast of the old tried friend have part.

CHORUS

Though ye voyage all seas, (*Str.* 2)
Ye shall light on no lands,
Nor on Lycia's leas,
Nor Ammonian sands,
Whence redemption shall come for the wretched, or loosing of Death's dread bands.

Doom's chasm hard by
Yawns fathomless-deep.
What availeth to cry
To the Gods, or to heap
Their altars with costly oblations, to plead with the slaughter of sheep ?

Ah, once there was one !— (*Ant.* 2)
Were life's light in the eyes
Of Phoebus's son,
Then our darling might rise
From the mansions of darkness, through portals of Hades return to our skies ;

δμαθέντας γὰρ ἀνίστη,
πρὶν αὐτὸν εἷλε διόβολον
πλῆκτρον πυρὸς κεραυνίου.
νῦν δὲ τίν' ἔτι βίου
ἐλπίδα προσδέχωμαι;

πάντα γὰρ ἤδη τετέλεσται βασιλεῦσι,
πάντων δὲ θεῶν ἐπὶ βωμοῖς
αἱμόρραντοι θυσίαι πλήρεις,
οὐδ' ἔστι κακῶν ἄκος οὐδέν.

ἀλλ' ἥδ' ὀπαδῶν ἐκ δόμων τις ἔρχεται
δακρυρροοῦσα· τίνα τύχην ἀκούσομαι;
πενθεῖν μέν, εἴ τι δεσπόταισι τυγχάνει,
συγγνωστόν· εἰ δ' ἔτ' ἐστὶν ἔμψυχος γυνὴ
εἴτ' οὖν ὄλωλεν εἰδέναι βουλοίμεθ' ἄν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

καὶ ζῶσαν εἰπεῖν καὶ θανοῦσαν ἔστι σοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ἂν αὑτὸς κατθάνοι τε καὶ βλέποι;

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

ἤδη προνωπής ἐστι καὶ ψυχορραγεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ τλῆμον, οἵας οἷος ὢν ἁμαρτάνεις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

οὔπω τόδ' οἶδε δεσπότης, πρὶν ἂν πάθῃ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐλπὶς μὲν οὐκέτ' ἐστὶ σῴζεσθαι βίον;

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

πεπρωμένη γὰρ ἡμέρα βιάζεται.

For he raised up the dead,
Ere flashed from the heaven,
From Zeus' hand sped,
That bolt of the levin.
But now what remaineth to wait for?—what hope of her life is given?

No sacrifice more
Unrendered remaineth;
No God, but the gore
From his altars down-raineth;
Yet healing is none for our ills, neither balm that the spirit sustaineth.

[*Enter* HANDMAID.

But hither cometh of the handmaids one,
Weeping the while. What tidings shall I hear?
For all afflictions that befall thy lords
Well mayst thou grieve; but if thy lady lives
Or even now hath passed, fain would we know.

HANDMAID

She liveth, and is dead: both mayst thou say.

CHORUS

Ay so!—how should the same be dead and live?

HANDMAID

Even now she droopeth, gasping out her life.

CHORUS

O stricken king—how noble a queen thou losest!

HANDMAID

His depth of loss he knows not ere it come.

CHORUS

And hope—is no hope left her life to save?

HANDMAID

None—for the day foredoomed constraineth her.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὔκουν ἐπ' αὐτῇ πράσσεται τὰ πρόσφορα;

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

κόσμος γ' ἕτοιμος, ᾧ σφε συνθάψει πόσις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴστω νυν εὐκλεής γε κατθανουμένη
γυνή τ' ἀρίστη τῶν ὑφ' ἡλίῳ μακρῷ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

πῶς δ' οὐκ ἀρίστη; τίς δ' ἐναντιώσεται;
τί χρὴ γενέσθαι τὴν ὑπερβεβλημένην
γυναῖκα; πῶς δ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἐνδείξαιτό τις
πόσιν προτιμῶσ' ἢ θέλουσ' ὑπερθανεῖν;
καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ πᾶσ' ἐπίσταται πόλις·
ἃ δ' ἐν δόμοις ἔδρασε θαυμάσει κλύων.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ ᾔσθεθ' ἡμέραν τὴν κυρίαν
ἥκουσαν, ὕδασι ποταμίοις λευκὸν χρόα
ἐλούσατ', ἐκ δ' ἑλοῦσα κεδρίνων δόμων
ἐσθῆτα κόσμον τ' εὐπρεπῶς ἠσκήσατο,
καὶ στᾶσα πρόσθεν Ἑστίας κατηύξατο·
δέσποιν', ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔρχομαι κατὰ χθονός,
πανύστατόν σε προσπίτνουσ' αἰτήσομαι,
τέκν' ὀρφανεῦσαι τἀμά, καὶ τῷ μὲν φίλην
σύζευξον ἄλοχον, τῇ δὲ γενναῖον πόσιν.
μηδ' ὥσπερ αὐτῶν ἡ τεκοῦσ' ἀπόλλυμαι
θανεῖν ἀώρους παῖδας, ἀλλ' εὐδαίμονας
ἐν γῇ πατρῴᾳ τερπνὸν ἐκπλῆσαι βίον.
πάντας δὲ βωμοὺς οἳ κατ' Ἀδμήτου δόμους
προσῆλθε κἀξέστεψε καὶ προσηύξατο,
πτόρθων ἀποσχίζουσα μυρσίνης φόβην,
ἄκλαυστος ἀστένακτος, οὐδὲ τοὐπιὸν
κακὸν μεθίστη χρωτὸς εὐειδῆ φύσιν.
κἄπειτα θάλαμον εἰσπεσοῦσα καὶ λέχος,

CHORUS

Are all things meet, then, being done for her?

HANDMAID

Yea, ready is her burial-attire.

CHORUS

Let her be sure that glorious she dies
And noblest far of women 'neath the sun.

HANDMAID

Noblest?—how not?—what tongue will dare gainsay?
What must the woman be who passeth her?
How could a wife give honour to her lord
More than by yielding her to die for him?
And this—yea, all the city knoweth this;
But what within she did, hear thou, and marvel.
For when she knew that the appointed day
Was come, in river-water her white skin
She bathed, and from the cedar-chests took forth
Vesture and jewels, and decked her gloriously,
And before Vesta's altar stood, and prayed:
"Queen, for I pass beneath the earth, I fall
Before thee now, and nevermore, and pray:—
Be mother to my orphans: mate with him
A loving wife, with her a noble husband.
Nor, as their mother dieth, so may they,
My children, die untimely, but with weal
In the home-land fill up a life of bliss."
To all the altars through Admetus' halls
She went, with wreaths she hung them, and she prayed,
Plucking the while the tresses of the myrtle,
Tearless, unsighing, and the imminent fate
Changed not the lovely rose-tint of her cheek.
Then to her bower she rushed, fell on the bed;

ἐνταῦθα δὴ 'δάκρυσε καὶ λέγει τάδε·
ὦ λέκτρον, ἔνθα παρθένει' ἔλυσ' ἐγὼ
κορεύματ' ἐκ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, οὗ θνήσκω πέρι,
χαῖρ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐχθαίρω σ'· ἀπώλεσας δέ με
μόνην· προδοῦναι γάρ σ' ὀκνοῦσα καὶ πόσιν
θνήσκω. σὲ δ' ἄλλη τις γυνὴ κεκτήσεται,
σώφρων μὲν οὐκ ἂν μᾶλλον, εὐτυχὴς δ' ἴσως.
κυνεῖ δὲ προσπίτνουσα, πᾶν δὲ δέμνιον
ὀφθαλμοτέγκτῳ δεύεται πλημμυρίδι.
ἐπεὶ δὲ πολλῶν δακρύων εἶχεν κόρον,
στείχει προνωπὴς ἐκπεσοῦσα δεμνίων,
καὶ πολλὰ θαλάμων ἐξιοῦσ' ἐπεστράφη
κἄρριψεν αὑτὴν αὖθις εἰς κοίτην πάλιν.
παῖδες δὲ πέπλων μητρὸς ἐξηρτημένοι
ἔκλαιον· ἡ δὲ λαμβάνουσ' ἐς ἀγκάλας
ἠσπάζετ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλον, ὡς θανουμένη.
πάντες δ' ἔκλαιον οἰκέται κατὰ στέγας
δέσποιναν οἰκτείροντες. ἡ δὲ δεξιὰν
προὔτειν' ἑκάστῳ, κοὔτις ἦν οὕτω κακὸς
ὃν οὐ προσεῖπε καὶ προσερρήθη πάλιν.
τοιαῦτ' ἐν οἴκοις ἐστὶν 'Αδμήτου κακά.
καὶ κατθανών τ' ἂν ὤλετ', ἐκφυγὼν δ' ἔχει
τοσοῦτον ἄλγος, οὗ ποτ' οὐ λελήσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἦ που στενάζει τοισίδ' Ἄδμητος κακοῖς,
ἐσθλῆς γυναικὸς εἰ στερηθῆναί σφε χρή;

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

κλαίει γ' ἄκοιτιν ἐν χεροῖν φίλην ἔχων,
καὶ μὴ προδοῦναι λίσσεται, τἀμήχανα
ζητῶν· φθίνει γὰρ καὶ μαραίνεται νόσῳ,
παρειμένη δέ, χειρὸς ἄθλιον βάρος,
ὅμως δὲ καίπερ σμικρὸν ἐμπνέουσ' ἔτι

And there, O there she wept, and thus she speaks:
"O couch, whereon I loosed the maiden zone
For this man, for whose sake I die to-day,
Farewell: I hate thee not. Me hast thou slain,
Me only: loth to fail thee and my lord
I die; but thee another bride shall own,
Not more true-hearted; happier perchance."
Then falls thereon, and kisses: all the bed
Is watered with the flood of melting eyes.
But having wept her fill of many tears,
Drooping she goeth, reeling from the couch;
Yet oft, as forth the bower she passed, returned,
And flung herself again upon the bed.
And the babes, clinging to their mother's robes,
Were weeping; and she clasped them in her arms,
Fondling now this, now that, as one death-doomed.
And all the servants 'neath the roof were weeping,
Pitying their lady. But to each she stretched
Her right hand forth; and none there was so mean
To whom she spake not and received reply.
Such are the ills Admetus' home within.
Now, had he died, he had ended; but, in 'scaping,
He bears a pain that he shall ne'er forget.

CHORUS

Doth not Admetus groan for this affliction
Of such a noble wife to be bereft?

HANDMAID

Ay, weeps, and clasps his dear one in his arms,
And prays, "Forsake me not!"—asking the while
The impossible, for still she wanes and wastes,
Drooping her hand, a misery-burdened weight;
But yet, albeit hardly breathing still,

βλέψαι πρὸς αὐγὰς βούλεται τὰς ἡλίου,
ὡς οὔποτ' αὖθις, ἀλλὰ νῦν πανύστατον
[ἀκτῖνα κύκλον θ' ἡλίου προσόψεται.]
ἀλλ' εἶμι καὶ σὴν ἀγγελῶ παρουσίαν·
οὐ γάρ τι πάντες εὖ φρονοῦσι κοιράνοις,
ὥστ' ἐν κακοῖσιν εὐμενεῖς παρεστάναι.
σὺ δ' εἶ παλαιὸς δεσπόταις ἐμοῖς φίλος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

ἰὼ Ζεῦ, τίς ἂν πᾷ πόρος κακῶν
γένοιτο καὶ λύσις τύχας ἃ πάρεστι κοιράνοις;

ΧΟΡΟΣ β'

ἔξεισί τις ; ἢ τέμω τρίχα,
καὶ μέλανα στολμὸν πέπλων
ἀμφιβαλώμεθ' ἤδη ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ γ'

δῆλα μέν, φίλοι, δῆλά γ', ἀλλ' ὅμως
θεοῖσιν εὐχώμεσθα· θεῶν
γὰρ δύναμις μεγίστη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ δ'

ὦναξ Παιάν,
ἔξευρε μηχανάν τιν' Ἀδμήτῳ κακῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ε'

πόριζε δὴ πόριζε· καὶ πάρος γὰρ
τῷδ' ἐφεῦρες τοῦτο,[1] καὶ νῦν
λυτήριος ἐκ θανάτου γενοῦ,
φόνιον δ' ἀπόπαυσον Ἅιδαν.

[1] Hermann : for MSS. τοῦδ' ἐφεῦρες, καὶ νῦν.

To the sun's rays fain would she lift her eyes,
As nevermore, but for the last time now
Destined to see the sun's beam and his orb.
But I will go and make thy presence known:
For 'tis not all that love so well their kings
As to stand by them, in afflictions loyal.
But from of old my lords were loved of thee. [*Exit.*

[*Nine members of the* CHORUS *chant successively*:—

CHORUS 1

O Zeus, for our lords is there naught but despair?
No path through the tangle of evils, no loosing of chains that have bound them?

CHORUS 2

No tidings?—remaineth but rending of hair,
And the stricken ones turned to the tomb with the garments of sorrow around them?

CHORUS 3

Even so—even so! yet uplift we in prayer
Our hands to the Gods, for that power from the days everlasting hath crowned them.

CHORUS 4

O Healer-king,
Find thou for Admetus the balm of relief, for the captive deliverance!

CHORUS 5

Vouchsafe it, vouchsafe it, for heretofore
Hast thou found out a way; even now once more
Pluck back our belovèd from Hades' door,
Strike down Death's hand red-reeking with gore!

ΧΟΡΟΣ ϛʹ

παπαῖ φεῦ, παπαῖ φεῦ· ἰὼ ἰώ.
ὦ παῖ Φέρητος, οἷʼ ἔπρα-
ξας δάμαρτος σᾶς στερείς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζʹ

ἆρʼ ἄξια καὶ σφαγᾶς τάδε,
καὶ πλέον ἢ βρόχῳ δέρην
οὐρανίῳ πελάσσαι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ηʹ

τὰν γὰρ οὐ φίλαν ἀλλὰ φιλτάταν
γυναῖκα κατθανοῦσαν ἐν
ἄματι τῷδʼ ἐπόψει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ θʹ

ἰδοὺ ἰδού,
ἥδʼ ἐκ δόμων δὴ καὶ πόσις πορεύεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βόασον ὦ, στέναξον, ὦ Φεραία
χθών, τὰν ἀρίσταν
γυναῖκα μαραινομέναν νόσῳ
κατὰ γᾶς χθόνιον παρʼ Ἅιδαν.
οὔποτε φήσω γάμον εὐφραίνειν
πλέον ἢ λυπεῖν, τοῖς τε πάροιθεν
τεκμαιρόμενος καὶ τάσδε τύχας
λεύσσων βασιλέως, ὅστις ἀρίστης
ἀπλακὼν ἀλόχου τῆσδʼ ἀβίωτον
τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον βιοτεύσει.

CHORUS 6

Woe's me! woe's me!—let the woe-dirge ring!
Ah, scion of Pheres, alas for thy lot, for love's long severance!

CHORUS 7

For such things on his sword might a man not fall,
Or knit up his throat in the noose 'twixt the heaven and the earth that quivereth?

CHORUS 8

For his dear one—nay, but his dearest of all
Shall he see on this day lying dead, while her spirit by Lethe shivereth.

CHORUS 9

O look!—look yonder, where forth of the hall
She cometh, and he at her side whose life by her life she delivereth.

CHORUS, UNITED

Cry, Land Pheraean, shrill the keen!
  Lift up thy voice to wail thy best
  There dying, and thy queenliest
Slow wasting to the Gates Unseen!

Tell me not this, that wedlock brings
  To them that wed more bliss than woe.
  I look back to the long-ago:
I muse on these unhappiest things.

Lo, here a king—he forfeiteth
  The truest heart, the noblest wife;
  And what shall be henceforth his life?
A darkened day, a living death.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

Ἅλιε καὶ φάος ἁμέρας, στρ. α'
οὐράνιαί τε δῖναι νεφέλας δρομαίου.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὁρᾷ σὲ κἀμέ, δύο κακῶς πεπραγότας,
οὐδὲν θεοὺς δράσαντας ἀνθ' ὅτου θανεῖ.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

γαῖά τε καὶ μελάθρων στέγαι ἀντ. α'
νυμφίδιοί τε κοῖται πατρίας Ἰωλκοῦ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔπαιρε σαυτήν, ὦ τάλαινα, μὴ προδῷς·
λίσσου δὲ τοὺς κρατοῦντας οἰκτεῖραι θεούς.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ὁρῶ δίκωπον ὁρῶ σκάφος [ἐν λίμνᾳ], στρ. β'
νεκύων δὲ πορθμεὺς
ἔχων χέρ' ἐπὶ κοντῷ Χάρων
μ' ἤδη καλεῖ· τί μέλλεις ;
ἐπείγου· σὺ κατείργεις.
τάδε τοί με σπερχόμενος ταχύνει.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οἴμοι, πικράν γε τήνδε μοι ναυκληρίαν
ἔλεξας. ὦ δύσδαιμον, οἷα πάσχομεν.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ἄγει μ' ἄγει μέ τις—οὐχ ὁρᾷς ;— ἀντ. β'
νεκύων ἐς αὐλὰν
ὑπ' ὀφρύσι κυαναυγέσι

Enter female attendants supporting ALCESTIS, *accompanied by* ADMETUS *and* CHILDREN.

ALCESTIS

O Sun, and the day's dear light, (*Str.* 1)
And ye clouds through the wheeling heaven in the race everlasting flying!

ADMETUS

He seeth thee and me, two stricken ones,
Which wrought the Gods no wrong, that thou shouldst die.

ALCESTIS

O Land, O stately height (*Ant.* 1)
Of mine halls, and my bridal couch in Iolcos my fatherland lying!

ADMETUS

Uplift thee, hapless love, forsake me not,
And pray the mighty Gods in ruth to turn.

ALCESTIS

(*Str.* 2)

I see the boat with the oars twin-sweeping,
And, his hand on the pole as in haste aye keeping,
Charon the Ferryman calleth, "What ho, wilt thou linger and linger?
Hasten,—'tis thou dost delay me!" he crieth with beckoning finger.

ADMETUS

Ah me! a bitter ferrying this thou namest!
O evil-starred, what woes endure we now!

ALCESTIS

(*Ant.* 2)

One haleth me—haleth me hence to the mansion
Of the dead!—dost thou mark not the darkling expansion

βλέπων πτερωτὸς Ἅιδας.
τί ῥέξεις; μέθες. οἵαν
ὁδὸν ἁ δειλαιοτάτα προβαίνω.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οἰκτρὰν φίλοισιν, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μάλιστ' ἐμοὶ
καὶ παισίν, οἷς δὴ πένθος ἐν κοινῷ τόδε.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

μέθετε μέθετέ μ' ἤδη. ἐπῳδ.
κλίνατ', οὐ σθένω ποσίν·
πλησίον Ἅιδας·
σκοτία δ' ἐπ' ὄσσοις νὺξ ἐφέρπει.
τέκνα τέκν', οὐκέτι δὴ
οὐκέτι μάτηρ σφῷν ἔστιν.
χαίροντες, ὦ τέκνα, τόδε φάος ὁρῷτον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οἴμοι· τόδ' ἔπος λυπρὸν ἀκούω
καὶ παντὸς ἐμοὶ θανάτου μεῖζον.
μὴ πρός σε θεῶν τλῇς με προδοῦναι,
μὴ πρὸς παίδων οὓς ὀρφανιεῖς,
ἀλλ' ἄνα, τόλμα·
σοῦ γὰρ φθιμένης οὐκέτ' ἂν εἴην·
ἐν σοὶ δ' ἐσμὲν καὶ ζῆν καὶ μή·
σὴν γὰρ φιλίαν σεβόμεσθα.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

Ἄδμηθ', ὁρᾷς γὰρ τἀμὰ πράγμαθ' ὡς ἔχει,
λέξαι θέλω σοι πρὶν θανεῖν ἃ βούλομαι.
ἐγώ σε πρεσβεύουσα κἀντὶ τῆς ἐμῆς
ψυχῆς καταστήσασα φῶς τόδ' εἰσορᾶν,
θνῄσκω, παρόν μοι μὴ θανεῖν ὑπὲρ σέθεν,
ἀλλ' ἄνδρα τε σχεῖν Θεσσαλῶν ὃν ἤθελον,
καὶ δῶμα ναίειν ὄλβιον τυραννίδι,

Of the pinions of Hades, the blaze of his eyes 'neath
their caverns out-glaring?
What wouldst thou?—Unhand me!—In anguish and
pain by what path am I faring!

ADMETUS

Woeful to them that love thee: most to me
And to thy babes, sad sharers in this grief.

ALCESTIS

Let be—let me sink back to rest me: (*Epode*)
There is no strength left in my feet.
Hades is near, and the night
Is darkening down on my sight.
Darlings, farewell: on the light
Long may ye look:—I have blessed ye
Ere your mother to nothingness fleet.

ADMETUS

Ah me! for thy word rusheth bitterness o'er me,
Bitterness passing the anguish of death!
Forsake me not now, by the Gods I implore thee.
By the babes thou wilt orphan, O yield not thy
breath!
Look up, be of cheer: if thou diest, before me
Is nothingness. Living, we aye live thine,
And we die in thy death; for our hearts are a shrine
Wherein for thy love passing word we adore thee!

ALCESTIS

Admetus,—for thou seëst all my plight,—
Fain would I speak mine heart's wish ere I die.
I, honouring thee, and setting thee in place
Before mine own soul still to see this light,
Am dying, unconstrained to die for thee.
I might have wed what man Thessalian
I would, have dwelt wealth-crowned in princely halls;

οὐκ ἠθέλησα ζῆν ἀποσπασθεῖσά σου
σὺν παισὶν ὀρφανοῖσιν· οὐδ' ἐφεισάμην
ἥβης ἔχουσα δῶρ', ἐν οἷς ἐτερπόμην.
καίτοι σ' ὁ φύσας χἠ τεκοῦσα προὔδοσαν,
καλῶς μὲν αὐτοῖς κατθανεῖν ἧκον βίου,
καλῶς δὲ σῶσαι παῖδα κεὐκλεῶς θανεῖν.
μόνος γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦσθα, κοὔτις ἐλπὶς ἦν
σοῦ κατθανόντος ἄλλα φιτύσειν τέκνα.
κἀγώ τ' ἂν ἔζων καὶ σὺ τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον,
κοὐκ ἂν μονωθεὶς σῆς δάμαρτος ἔστενες
καὶ παῖδας ὠρφάνευες. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν
θεῶν τις ἐξέπραξεν ὥσθ' οὕτως ἔχειν.
εἶεν· σὺ νῦν μοι τῶνδ' ἀπόμνησαι χάριν·
αἰτήσομαι γάρ σ' ἀξίαν μὲν οὔποτε·
ψυχῆς γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστι τιμιώτερον·
δίκαια δ', ὡς φήσεις σύ· τούσδε γὰρ φιλεῖς
οὐχ ἧσσον ἢ 'γὼ παῖδας, εἴπερ εὖ φρονεῖς·
τούτους ἀνάσχου δεσπότας ἐμῶν δόμων,
καὶ μὴ 'πιγήμῃς τοῖσδε μητρυιὰν τέκνοις,
ἥτις κακίων οὖσ' ἐμοῦ γυνὴ φθόνῳ
τοῖς σοῖσι κἀμοῖς παισὶ χεῖρα προσβαλεῖ.
μὴ δῆτα δράσῃς ταῦτά γ', αἰτοῦμαί σ' ἐγώ.
ἐχθρὰ γὰρ ἡ 'πιοῦσα μητρυιὰ τέκνοις
τοῖς πρόσθ', ἐχίδνης οὐδὲν ἠπιωτέρα.
καὶ παῖς μὲν ἄρσην πατέρ' ἔχει πύργον μέγαν,
ὃν καὶ προσεῖπε καὶ προσερρήθη πάλιν·
σὺ δ', ὦ τέκνον μοι, πῶς κορευθήσει καλῶς;
ποίας τυχοῦσα συζύγου τῷ σῷ πατρί;
μή σοί τιν' αἰσχρὰν προσβαλοῦσα κληδόνα
ἥβης ἐν ἀκμῇ σοὺς διαφθείρῃ γάμους.
οὐ γάρ σε μήτηρ οὔτε νυμφεύσει ποτὲ
οὔτ' ἐν τόκοισι τοῖσι σοῖσι θαρσυνεῖ

Yet would not live on, torn away from thee,
With orphaned children: wherefore spared I not
The gifts of youth still mine, wherein I joyed.
Yet she that bare, he that begat, forsook thee,
Though fair for death their time of life was come,
Yea, fair, to save their son and die renowned.
Their only one wert thou: no hope there was
To get them sons thereafter, hadst thou died.
So had I lived, and thou, to after days:
Thou wert not groaning, of thy wife bereaved,
Thy children motherless. Howbeit this
Some God hath brought to pass: it was to be.
So be it. Remember thou what thank is due
For this,—I never can ask full requital;
For naught there is more precious than the life,—
And justly due; for these thy babes thou lovest
No less than I, if that thine heart be right.

Suffer that they have lordship in mine home:
Wed not a stepdame to supplant our babes,
Whose heart shall tell her she is no Alcestis,
Whose jealous hand shall smite them, thine and mine.
Do not, ah, do not this—I pray thee, I!
For the new stepdame hateth still the babes
Of her that's gone with more than viper-venom.
The boy—his father is his tower of strength
To whom to speak, of whom to win reply;
But, O my child, what girlhood will be thine?
To thee what would she be, thy father's yoke-mate?
What if with ill report she smirched thy name,
And in thy youth's flower marred thy marriage-hopes?
For thee thy mother ne'er shall deck for bridal,
Nor hearten thee in travail, O my child,

παροῦσ', ἵν' οὐδὲν μητρὸς εὐμενέστερον.
δεῖ γάρ θανεῖν με· καὶ τόδ' οὐκ ἐς αὔριον
οὐδ' εἰς τρίτην μοι μηνὸς ἔρχεται κακόν,
ἀλλ' αὐτίκ' ἐν τοῖς μηκέτ' οὖσι λέξομαι.
χαίροντες εὐφραίνοισθε· καὶ σοὶ μέν, πόσι,
γυναῖκ' ἀρίστην ἔστι κομπάσαι λαβεῖν,
ὑμῖν δέ, παῖδες, μητρὸς ἐκπεφυκέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει· πρὸ τούτου γὰρ λέγειν οὐχ ἅζομαι·
δράσει τάδ', εἴπερ μὴ φρενῶν ἁμαρτάνει.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔσται τάδ' ἔσται, μὴ τρέσῃς· ἐπεὶ σ' ἐγὼ
καὶ ζῶσαν εἶχον καὶ θανοῦσ' ἐμὴ γυνὴ
μόνη κεκλήσει, κοὔτις ἀντὶ σοῦ ποτε
τόνδ' ἄνδρα νύμφη Θεσσαλὶς προσφθέγξεται.
οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως οὔτε πατρὸς εὐγενοῦς
οὔτ' εἶδος ἄλλως ἐκπρεπεστάτη γυνή.
ἅλις δὲ παίδων, τῶνδ' ὄνησιν εὔχομαι
θεοῖς γενέσθαι· σοῦ γὰρ οὐκ ὠνήμεθα.
οἴσω δὲ πένθος οὐκ ἐτήσιον τὸ σόν,
ἀλλ' ἔστ' ἂν αἰὼν οὑμὸς ἀντέχῃ, γύναι,
στυγῶν μὲν ἥ μ' ἔτικτεν, ἐχθαίρων δ' ἐμὸν
πατέρα· λόγῳ γὰρ ἦσαν οὐκ ἔργῳ φίλοι.
σὺ δ' ἀντιδοῦσα τῆς ἐμῆς τὰ φίλτατα
ψυχῆς ἔσωσας. ἆρά μοι στένειν πάρα
τοιᾶσδ' ἁμαρτάνοντι συζύγου σέθεν;
παύσω δὲ κώμους συμποτῶν θ' ὁμιλίας
στεφάνους τε μοῦσάν θ' ἣ κατεῖχ' ἐμοὺς δόμους.
οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὔτ' ἂν βαρβίτου θίγοιμ' ἔτι
οὔτ' ἂν φρέν' ἐξαίροιμι πρὸς Λίβυν λακεῖν
αὐλόν· σὺ γάρ μου τέρψιν ἐξείλου βίου.
σοφῇ δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σὸν

There, where naught gentler than the mother is.
For I must die; nor shall it be to-morn,
Nor on the third day comes on me this doom:
Straightway of them that are not shall I be.
Farewell, be happy. Now for thee, my lord,
Abides the boast to have won the noblest wife,
For you, my babes, to have sprung from noblest mother.

CHORUS

Fear not; for I am bold to speak for him:
This will he do, an if he be not mad.

ADMETUS

It shall, it shall be, fear not: thou alone
Living wast mine; and dead, mine only wife
Shalt thou be called: nor ever in thy stead
Shall bride Thessalian hail me as her lord.
None is there of a father so high-born,
None so for beauty peerless among women.
Children enough have I: I pray the Gods
For joy in these—lost is our joy in thee!
Not for a year's space will I mourn for thee,
But long as this my life shall last, dear wife,
Loathing my mother, hating mine own sire,
For in word only, not in deed, they loved me.
Thou gav'st in ransom for my life thine all
Of precious, and didst save. Do I not well
To groan, who lose such yokefellow in thee?
Revels shall cease, and gatherings at the wine,
Garlands, and song, which wont to fill mine house.
No, never more mine hand shall touch the lyre:
Nor will I lift up heart to sing to flute
Of Libya: stolen is life's joy with thee.
Fashioned by craftsmen's cunning hands, thy form

εἰκασθὲν ἐν λέκτροισιν ἐκταθήσεται,
ᾧ προσπεσοῦμαι καὶ περιπτύσσων χέρας
ὄνομα καλῶν σὸν τὴν φίλην ἐν ἀγκάλαις
δόξω γυναῖκα καίπερ οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν,
ψυχρὰν μέν, οἶμαι, τέρψιν, ἀλλ' ὅμως βάρος
ψυχῆς ἀπαντλοίην ἄν· ἐν δ' ὀνείρασι
φοιτῶσά μ' εὐφραίνοις ἄν· ἡδὺ γὰρ φίλους
κἀν νυκτὶ λεύσσειν, ὅντιν' ἂν παρῇ χρόνον.
εἰ δ' Ὀρφέως μοι γλῶσσα καὶ μέλος παρῆν,
ὥστ' ἢ κόρην Δήμητρος ἢ κείνης πόσιν
ὕμνοισι κηλήσαντά σ' ἐξ Ἅιδου λαβεῖν,
κατῆλθον ἄν, καί μ' οὔθ' ὁ Πλούτωνος κύων
οὔθ' οὑπὶ κώπῃ ψυχοπομπὸς ἂν Χάρων
ἔσχον, πρὶν εἰς φῶς σὸν καταστῆσαι βίον.
ἀλλ' οὖν ἐκεῖσε προσδόκα μ', ὅταν θάνω,
καὶ δῶμ' ἑτοίμαζ', ὡς συνοικήσουσά μοι.
ἐν ταῖσιν αὐταῖς γάρ μ' ἐπισκήψω κέδροις
σοὶ τούσδε θεῖναι πλευρά τ' ἐκτεῖναι πέλας
πλευροῖσι τοῖς σοῖς· μηδὲ γὰρ θανών ποτε
σοῦ χωρὶς εἴην τῆς μόνης πιστῆς ἐμοί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἐγώ σοι πένθος ὡς φίλος φίλῳ
λυπρὸν συνοίσω τῆσδε· καὶ γὰρ ἀξία.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ὦ παῖδες, αὐτοὶ δὴ τάδ' εἰσηκούσατε
πατρὸς λέγοντος μὴ γαμεῖν ἄλλην τινὰ
γυναῖκ' ἐφ' ὑμῖν μηδ' ἀτιμάσειν ἐμέ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

καὶ νῦν γέ φημι, καὶ τελευτήσω τάδε.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ἐπὶ τοῖσδε παῖδας χειρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς δέχου.

Imaged, shall lie as sleeping on a bed,
Falling whereon, and clasping with mine hands,
Calling thy name, in fancy shall mine arms
Hold my belovèd, though I hold her not:—
A drear delight, I wot: yet shall I lift
The burden from my soul. In dreams shalt thou
Haunt me and gladden: sweet to see the loved,
Though but as fleeting phantoms of the night.

But, were the tongue and strain of Orpheus mine,
To witch Demeter's Daughter and her lord,
And out of Hades by my song to win thee,
I had fared down; nor Pluto's Hound had stayed
me,
Nor Spirit-wafter Charon at the oar,
Or ever I restored thy life to light.
Yet there look thou for me, whenso I die:
Prepare a home, as who shall dwell with me.
For in the selfsame cedar chest, wherein
Thou liest, will I bid them lay my bones
At thy side: never, not in death, from thee,
My one true loyal love, may I be sundered!

CHORUS

Yea, I withal will mourn, as friend with friend,
With thee for this thy wife, for she is worthy.

ALCESTIS

My children, ye yourselves have heard all this,
Have heard your father pledge him ne'er to wed
For your oppression and for my dishonour.

ADMETUS

Yea, now I say it, and I will perform.

ALCESTIS

On these terms take the children from mine hand.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
δέχομαι φίλον γε δῶρον ἐκ φίλης χερός.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ
σὺ νῦν γενοῦ τοῖσδ' ἀντ' ἐμοῦ μήτηρ τέκνοις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
πολλή μ' ἀνάγκη, σοῦ γ' ἀπεστερημένοις.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ
ὦ τέκν', ὅτε ζῆν χρῆν μ', ἀπέρχομαι κάτω.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
οἴμοι, τί δράσω δῆτα σοῦ μονούμενος;

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ
χρόνος μαλάξει σ'· οὐδέν ἐσθ' ὁ κατθανών.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ἄγου με σὺν σοί, πρὸς θεῶν, ἄγου κάτω.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ
ἀρκοῦμεν ἡμεῖς οἱ προθνῄσκοντες σέθεν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ὦ δαῖμον, οἵας συζύγου μ' ἀποστερεῖς.

ΑΛΚΠΣΤΙΣ
καὶ μὴν σκοτεινὸν ὄμμα μου βαρύνεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ἀπωλόμην ἄρ', εἴ με δὴ λείψεις, γύναι.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ
ὡς οὐκέτ' οὖσαν οὐδὲν ἂν λέγοις ἐμέ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ὄρθου πρόσωπον, μὴ λίπῃς παῖδας σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ
οὐ δῆθ' ἑκοῦσά γ', ἀλλὰ χαίρετ', ὦ τέκνα.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
βλέψον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέψον.

ADMETUS

I take them—precious gift from precious hand.

ALCESTIS

Thou in my stead be a mother now to these.

ADMETUS

I must, I must—they are bereft of thee!

ALCESTIS

Darlings, when most I need to live, I die.

ADMETUS

Ah me!—what shall I do, forlorn of thee?

ALCESTIS

Thy wound shall time heal :—nothingness are the dead.

ADMETUS

Take me, ah take me with thee to the grave!

ALCESTIS

Suffice it that one dies—she dies for thee.

ADMETUS

O Fate, of what a wife dost thou bereave me!

ALCESTIS

Dark--dark—mine eyes are drooping, heavy-laden.

ADMETUS

Oh, I am lost if thou wilt leave me, wife!

ALCESTIS

No more—I am no more : as naught account me.

ADMETUS

Uplift thy face : forsake not thine own children!

ALCESTIS

Sore loth do I—yet O farewell, my babes!

ADMETUS

Look on them—look!

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

οὐδέν εἰμ' ἔτι.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τί δρᾷς ; προλείπεις ;

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

χαῖρ'.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀπωλόμην τάλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βέβηκεν, οὐκέτ' ἔστιν Ἀδμήτου γυνή.

ΕΥΜΗΛΟΣ

ἰώ μοι τύχας. μαῖα δὴ κάτω στρ.
βέβακεν, οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὦ
πάτερ, ὑφ' ἁλίῳ.
προλιποῦσα δ' ἀμὸν βίον
ὠρφάνισεν τλάμων.
ἴδε γὰρ ἴδε βλέφαρον
καὶ παρατόνους χέρας.
ὑπάκουσον ἄκουσον, ὦ μᾶτερ, ἀντιάζω
σ' ἐγώ, μᾶτερ, ἐγὼ
* * καλοῦμαί σ' ὁ
σὸς ποτὶ σοῖσι πίτνων στόμασιν νεοσσός.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τὴν οὐ κλύουσαν οὐδ' ὁρῶσαν· ὥστ' ἐγὼ
καὶ σφὼ βαρείᾳ συμφορᾷ πεπλήγμεθα.

ΕΥΜΗΛΟΣ

νέος ἐγώ, πάτερ, λείπομαι φίλας ἀντ.
μονόστολός τε ματρός· ὦ
σχέτλια δὴ παθὼν

ALCESTIS

Nothing am I henceforth.

ADMETUS

Ah, leav'st thou us?

ALCESTIS

Farewell. [*Dies.*

ADMETUS

O wretch undone!

CHORUS

Gone,—gone! No more she lives, Admetus' wife!

EUMELUS

(*Str.*)

Woe for my lot!—to the tomb hath my mother de-
scended, descended! [the sun
Never again, O my father, she seëth the light of
In anguish she leaves us forsaken: the story is
ended, is ended, [motherless life is begun.
Of her sheltering love, and the tale of the
Look—look on her eyelids, her hands drooping nerve-
less! O hear me, O hear me!
It is I—I beseech thee, my mother!—thine own
little, own little bird! [me, so near me;
It is I—O, I cast me upon thee—thy lips are so near
Unto mine am I pressing them, mother!—I plead
for a word—but a word!

ADMETUS

With her who heareth not, nor seëth: ye
And I are stricken with a heavy doom.

EUMELUS

(*Ant.*)

And I am but a little one, father—so young, and for-
saken, forsaken, [shall be mine!
Forlorn of my mother—O hapless! a weariful lot

ἐγὼ ἔργα * * σύ τε,
σύγκασι μοι κούρα,
* * * * * συνέτλας·
* * * * ὦ πάτερ.
ἀνόνατ' ἀνόνατ' ἐνύμφευσας, οὐδὲ γήρως
ἔβας τέλος σὺν τᾷδ'·
ἔφθιτο γὰρ πάρος,
οἰχομένας δὲ σοῦ, μᾶτερ, ὄλωλεν οἶκος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἄδμητ', ἀνάγκη τάσδε συμφορὰς φέρειν·
οὐ γάρ τι πρῶτος οὐδὲ λοίσθιος βροτῶν
γυναικὸς ἐσθλῆς ἤμπλακες· γίγνωσκε δὲ
ὡς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν κατθανεῖν ὀφείλεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἐπίσταμαί γε, κοὐκ ἄφνω κακὸν τόδε
προσέπτατ'· εἰδὼς δ' αὔτ' ἐτειρόμην πάλαι.
ἀλλ', ἐκφορὰν γὰρ τοῦδε θήσομαι νεκροῦ,
πάρεστε καὶ μένοντες ἀντηχήσατε
παιᾶνα τῷ κάτωθεν ἀσπόνδῳ θεῷ.
πᾶσιν δὲ Θεσσαλοῖσιν ὧν ἐγὼ κρατῶ
πένθους γυναικὸς τῆσδε κοινοῦσθαι λέγω
κουρᾷ ξυρήκει καὶ μελαμπέπλῳ στολῇ.
τέθριππά θ' οἳ ζεύγνυσθε καὶ μονάμπυκας
πώλους, σιδήρῳ τέμνετ' αὐχένων φόβην.
αὐλῶν δὲ μὴ κατ' ἄστυ, μὴ λύρας κτύπος
ἔστω σελήνας δώδεκ' ἐκπληρουμένας·
οὐ γάρ τιν' ἄλλον φίλτερον θάψω νεκρὸν
τοῦδ' οὐδ' ἀμείνον' εἰς ἔμ'· ἀξία δέ μοι
τιμῆς, ἐπεὶ τέθνηκεν ἀντ' ἐμοῦ μόνη.

And thou, little maiden, my sister, the burden hast taken, hast taken,
  Which thy brother may bear not alone, and a weariful lot shall be thine.
O father, of long-living love was thy marriage uncherished, uncherished:
  Thou hast won not the goal of old age with the love of thy youth at thy side;
For, or ever she came to the fulness of days, she hath perished, hath perished;
  And the home is a wreck and a ruin, for thou, O my mother, hast died!

CHORUS

Admetus, this affliction must thou bear.
Not first of mortals thou, nor thou the last
Hast lost a noble wife; and, be thou sure,
From us, from all, this debt is due—to die.

ADMETUS

I know it: nowise unforeseen this ill
Hath swooped on me: long anguished I foreknew it.
But—for to burial must I bear my dead—
Stay ye, and, tarrying, echo back my wail
To that dark God whom no drink-offerings move.
And all Thessalians over whom I rule
I bid take part in mourning for this woman
With shaven head and sable-shrouding robe.
And ye which yoke the cars four-horsed, or steeds
Of single frontlet, shear with steel their manes.
Music of flutes the city through, or lyres,
Be none, while twelve moons round their circles out:
For dearer dead, or kinder unto me
I shall not bury: worthy of mine honour
Is she, for she alone hath died for me.

[*Exit with attendants bearing in the corpse.*

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Πελίου θύγατερ, στρ. α'
χαίρουσά μοι εἰν Ἀίδα δόμοισιν
τὸν ἀνάλιον οἶκον οἰκετεύοις.
ἴστω δ' Ἀίδας ὁ μελαγχαίτας θεὸς ὅς τ' ἐπὶ κώπᾳ
πηδαλίῳ τε γέρων
νεκροπομπὸς ἵζει,
πολὺ δὴ πολὺ δὴ γυναῖκ' ἀρίσταν
λίμναν Ἀχεροντίαν πορεύ-
σας ἐλάτᾳ δικώπῳ.

πολλά σε μουσοπόλοι ἀντ. α'
μέλψουσι καθ' ἑπτάτονόν τ' ὀρείαν
χέλυν ἔν τ' ἀλύροις κλέοντες ὕμνοις,
Σπάρτᾳ κύκλος ἁνίκα Καρνείου περινίσσεται ὥρας
μηνός, ἀειρομένας
παννύχου σελάνας,
λιπαραῖσί τ' ἐν ὀλβίαις Ἀθάναις.
τοίαν ἔλιπες θανοῦσα μολ-
πὰν μελέων ἀοιδοῖς.

εἴθ' ἐπ' ἐμοὶ μὲν εἴη, στρ. β'
δυναίμαν δέ σε πέμψαι
φάος ἐξ Ἀίδα τεράμνων
Κωκυτοῦ τε ῥεέθρων
ποταμίᾳ νερτέρᾳ τε κώπᾳ.
σὺ γάρ, ὦ μόνα, ὦ φίλα γυναικῶν,
σὺ τὸν αὑτᾶς
ἔτλας πόσιν ἀντὶ σᾶς ἀμεῖψαι
ψυχᾶς ἐξ Ἅιδα. κοῦφα σοι
χθὼν ἐπάνωθε πέσοι, γύναι. εἰ δέ τι
καινὸν ἕλοιτο λέχος πόσις, ἦ μάλ' ἂν ἔμοιγ' ἂν εἴη
στυγηθεὶς τέκνοις τε τοῖς σοῖς.

CHORUS

O Pelias' daughter, I hail thee : (*Str.* 1)
I wave thee eternal farewell
To thine home where the darkness must veil thee,
Where in Hades unsunned thou shalt dwell.
Know, Dark-haired, thy grey Spirit-wafter
Hath sped not with twy-plashing oar
Woman nobler, nor shall speed hereafter
To Acheron's shore.

For the seven-stringed shell, or for pæan (*Ant.* 1)
Unharped, shall thy fame be a song,
When o'er Sparta the moon Carnean
High rideth the whole night long.
And in Athens the wealthy and splendid
Shall thy name on her bards' lips ring ;
Such a theme hast thou left to be blended
With the lays that they sing.

O that the power were but in me, (*Str.* 2)
From the chambers of Hades, to light,
And from streams of Cocytus, to win thee
With the oar of the River of Night !
O dear among women, strong-hearted
From Hades to ransom thy lord !
Never spirit in such wise departed.
Light lie on thee, Lady, the sward !
And, if ever thine husband shall mate him
Again with a bride in thy stead,
I will loathe him, his children shall hate him,
The babes of the dead.

ματέρος οὐ θελούσας ἀντ. β′
πρὸ παιδὸς χθονὶ κρύψαι
δέμας, οὐδὲ πατρὸς γεραιοῦ,
* * * * * * *
ὃν ἔτεκον δ', οὐκ ἔτλαν ῥύεσθαι
σχετλίω, πολιὰν ἔχοντε χαίταν.
σὺ δ' ἐν ἥβᾳ
νέᾳ προθανοῦσα φωτὸς οἴχει.
τοιαύτας εἴη μοι κῦρσαι
συνδυάδος φιλίας ἀλόχου· τοῦτο γὰρ
ἐν βιότῳ σπάνιον μέρος· ἦ γὰρ ἂν ἔμοιγ' ἄλυπος
δι' αἰῶνος ἂν ξυνείη.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ξένοι, Φεραίας τῆσδε κωμῆται χθονός,
Ἄδμητον ἐν δόμοισιν ἆρα κιγχάνω ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔστ' ἐν δόμοισι παῖς Φέρητος, Ἡράκλεις.
ἀλλ' εἰπὲ χρεία τίς σε Θεσσαλῶν χθόνα
πέμπει, Φεραῖον ἄστυ προσβῆναι τόδε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Τιρυνθίῳ πράσσω τιν' Εὐρυσθεῖ πόνον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ ποῖ πορεύει ; τῷ προσέζευξαι πλάνῳ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θρῃκὸς τέτρωρον ἅρμα Διομήδους μέτα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς οὖν δυνήσει ; μῶν ἄπειρος εἶ ξένου ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄπειρος· οὔπω Βιστόνων ἦλθον χθόνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἵππων δεσπόσαι σ' ἄνευ μάχης.

When his mother would not be contented (*Ant.* 2)
To hide her for him in the tomb,
Nor his grey-haired father consented,
Unholpen he looked on his doom. [not,
Whom they bare—the hard-hearted!—they cared
Though hoary their locks were, to save!
Thou art gone, for thy great love spared not
Thy blossom of youth from the grave.
Ah, may it be mine, such communion
Of hearts!—'tis vouchsafed unto few:—
Then ours should be sorrowless union
Our life-days through.

Enter HERCULES.

HERCULES

Strangers, who dwell in this Pheraean land,
Say, do I find Admetus in his home?

CHORUS

Hercules, in his home is Pheres' son.
Yet say, what brings thee to Thessalian land,
That thou shouldst come to this Pheraean town?

HERCULES

A toil for King Eurystheus, lord of Tiryns.

CHORUS

And whither journeyest? To what wanderings yoked?

HERCULES

For Thracian Diomedes' four-horsed car.

CHORUS

How canst thou? Sure he is unknown to thee!

HERCULES

Unknown: Bistonian land I never saw.

CHORUS

Not save by battle may those steeds be won.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἀπειπεῖν τοὺς πόνους οἷόν τ᾽ ἐμοί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
κτανὼν ἄρ᾽ ἥξεις ἢ θανὼν αὐτοῦ μενεῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
οὐ τόνδ᾽ ἀγῶνα πρῶτον ἂν δράμοιμ᾽ ἐγώ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί δ᾽ ἂν κρατήσας δεσπότην πλέον λάβοις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
πώλους ἀπάξω κοιράνῳ Τιρυνθίῳ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
οὐκ εὐμαρὲς χαλινὸν ἐμβαλεῖν γνάθοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
εἰ μή γε πῦρ πνέουσι μυκτήρων ἄπο.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ἀλλ᾽ ἄνδρας ἀρταμοῦσι λαιψηραῖς γνάθοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
θηρῶν ὀρείων χόρτον, οὐχ ἵππων λέγεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
φάτνας ἴδοις ἂν αἵμασιν πεφυρμένας.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
τίνος δ᾽ ὁ θρέψας παῖς πατρὸς κομπάζεται;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
Ἄρεος, ζαχρύσου Θρῃκίας πέλτης ἄναξ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
καὶ τόνδε τοὐμοῦ δαίμονος πόνον λέγεις,
σκληρὸς γὰρ ἀεὶ καὶ πρὸς αἶπος ἔρχεται,
εἰ χρή με παισὶν οὓς Ἄρης ἐγείνατο
μάχην συνάψαι, πρῶτα μὲν Λυκάονι,
αὖθις δὲ Κύκνῳ, τόνδε δ᾽ ἔρχομαι τρίτον
ἀγῶνα πώλοις δεσπότῃ τε συμβαλῶν.

HERCULES

Yet flinch I may not from the appointed toils.

CHORUS

Thy life or his—a triumph or a grave.

HERCULES

Not this the first time I have run such course.

CHORUS

What profit is it if thou slay their lord?

HERCULES

Those steeds shall I drive back to Tiryns' king.

CHORUS

Hard task, to set the bit betwixt their jaws.

HERCULES

That shall I, if their nostrils breathe not fire.

CHORUS

Yea, but with ravening jaws do they rend men.

HERCULES

Go to—thus mountain-wolves, not horses, feast.

CHORUS

Nay, thou canst see their cribs besprent with gore.

HERCULES

Whom boasteth he for father, he that reared them?

CHORUS

Ares, the lord of Thracia's golden shields.

HERCULES

Thou say'st: such toil my fate imposeth still,
Harsh evermore, uphillward straining aye,
If I must still in battle close with sons
Gotten of Ares; with Lycaon first,
And Cycnus then; and lo, I come to grapple—
The third strife this—with yon steeds and their lord.

ἀλλ' οὔτις ἔστιν ὃς τὸν Ἀλκμήνης γόνον
τρέσαντα χεῖρα πολεμίαν ποτ' ὄψεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὅδ' αὐτὸς τῆσδε κοίρανος χθονὸς
Ἄδμητος ἔξω δωμάτων πορεύεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

χαῖρ', ὦ Διὸς παῖ Περσέως τ' ἀφ' αἵματος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Ἄδμητε, καὶ σὺ χαῖρε, Θεσσαλῶν ἄναξ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θέλοιμ' ἄν· εὔνουν δ' ὄντα σ' ἐξεπίσταμαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί χρῆμα κουρᾷ τῇδε πενθίμῳ πρέπεις;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θάπτειν τιν' ἐν τῇδ' ἡμέρᾳ μέλλω νεκρόν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀπ' οὖν τέκνων σῶν πημονὴν εἴργοι θεός.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ζῶσιν κατ' οἴκους παῖδες οὓς ἔφυσ' ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πατήρ γε μὴν ὡραῖος, εἴπερ οἴχεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

κἀκεῖνος ἔστι χἠ τεκοῦσά μ', Ἡράκλεις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ μὴν γυνή γ' ὄλωλεν Ἄλκηστις σέθεν;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

διπλοῦς ἐπ' αὐτῇ μῦθος ἔστι μοι λέγειν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πότερα θανούσης εἶπας ἢ ζώσης πέρι;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔστιν τε κοὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ἀλγύνει δέ με.

But the man lives not who shall ever see
Alcmena's son flinch from a foeman's hand.

CHORUS

Lo, there himself, the ruler of the realm,
Admetus, cometh forth his palace-hall.
Enter ADMETUS.

ADMETUS

Joy to thee, sprung from Zeus' and Perseus' blood!

HERCULES

Admetus, joy to thee, Thessalia's king!

ADMETUS (*aside*)

Joy?—would 'twere mine! (*aloud*) Thanks!—thy good heart I know.

HERCULES

Wherefore for mourning shaven show'st thou thus?

ADMETUS

This day must I commit to earth a corpse.

HERCULES

Now heaven forfend thou mourn'st for children dead!

ADMETUS

In mine home live the babes whom I begat.

HERCULES

Sooth, death-ripe were thy sire, if he be gone.

ADMETUS

He liveth, and my mother, Hercules.

HERCULES

Surely, O surely, not thy wife, Admetus?

ADMETUS

Twofold must be mine answer touching her.

HERCULES

Or hath she died, say'st thou, or liveth yet?

ADMETUS

She is, and she is not: here lies my grief.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐδέν τι μᾶλλον οἶδ'· ἄσημα γὰρ λέγεις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ οἶσθα μοίρας ἧς τυχεῖν αὐτὴν χρεών;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἶδ' ἀντὶ σοῦ γε κατθανεῖν ὑφειμένην.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

πῶς οὖν ἔτ' ἔστιν, εἴπερ ᾔνεσεν τάδε;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἆ, μὴ πρόκλαι' ἄκοιτιν, εἰς τόδ' ἀμβαλοῦ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τέθνηχ' ὁ μέλλων, κοὐκέτ' ἔσθ' ὁ κατθανών.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χωρὶς τό τ' εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὴ νομίζεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σὺ τῇδε κρίνεις, Ἡράκλεις, κείνῃ δ' ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα κλαίεις; τίς φίλων ὁ κατθανών;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

γυνή· γυναικὸς ἀρτίως μεμνήμεθα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὀθνεῖος ἢ σοὶ συγγενὴς γεγῶσά τις;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὀθνεῖος, ἄλλως δ' ἦν ἀναγκαία δόμοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις σοῖσιν ὤλεσεν βίον;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

πατρὸς θανόντος ἐνθάδ' ὠρφανεύετο.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦ.
εἴθ' ηὕρομέν σ', Ἄδμητε, μὴ λυπούμενον.

HERCULES

Nothing the more I know: dark sayings thine.

ADMETUS

Know'st not the fate to which she is foredoomed?

HERCULES

I know she pledged herself to die for thee.

ADMETUS

How lives she then, if she to this consented?

HERCULES

Mourn not thy wife ere dead: abide the hour.

ADMETUS

One doomed is dead; the dead hath ceased to be.

HERCULES

Diverse are these—to be and not to be.

ADMETUS

This, Hercules, thy sentence: that is mine.

HERCULES

But now, why weep'st thou? What dear friend is dead?

ADMETUS

A woman—hers the memory we mourn.

HERCULES

Some stranger born, or nigh of kin to thee?

ADMETUS

A stranger born: yet near and dear to us.

HERCULES

How died a stranger then in house of thine?

ADMETUS

An orphan here she dwelt, her father dead.

HERCULES

Would I had found thee mourning not, Admetus.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ὡς δὴ τί δράσων τόνδ' ὑπορράπτεις λόγον;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ξένων πρὸς ἄλλων ἑστίαν πορεύσομαι.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦναξ· μὴ τοσόνδ' ἔλθοι κακόν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
λυπουμένοις ὀχληρός, εἰ μόλοι, ξένος.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
τεθνᾶσιν οἱ θανόντες· ἀλλ' ἴθ' εἰς δόμους.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
αἰσχρὸν παρὰ κλαίουσι θοινᾶσθαι φίλοις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
χωρὶς ξενῶνές εἰσιν οἷ σ' ἐσάξομεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
μέθες με, καί σοι μυρίαν ἕξω χάριν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου σ' ἀνδρὸς ἑστίαν μολεῖν.
ἡγοῦ σὺ τῷδε δωμάτων ἐξωπίους
ξενῶνας οἴξας, τοῖς τ' ἐφεστῶσιν φράσον
σίτων παρεῖναι πλῆθος· ἐν δὲ κλῄσατε
θύρας μεσαύλους· οὐ πρέπει θοινωμένους
κλύειν στεναγμῶν οὐδὲ λυπεῖσθαι ξένους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί δρᾷς; τοιαύτης συμφορᾶς προσκειμένης,
Ἄδμητε, τολμᾷς ξενοδοκεῖν; τί μῶρος εἶ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ἀλλ' εἰ δόμων σφε καὶ πόλεως ἀπήλασα
ξένον μολόντα, μᾶλλον ἄν μ' ἐπῄνεσας;
οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεί μοι συμφορὰ μὲν οὐδὲν ἂν
μείων ἐγίγνετ', ἀξενώτερος δ' ἐγώ.

ADMETUS

Ay so ?—what purpose lurketh 'neath thy word ?

HERCULES

On will I to another host's hearth-welcome.

ADMETUS

It cannot be : may no such grief befall !

HERCULES

A burden unto mourners comes the guest.

ADMETUS

Dead are the dead :—but enter thou mine house.

HERCULES

'Twere shame to banquet in the house of weeping.

ADMETUS

Aloof the guest-halls are where we will lodge thee.

HERCULES

Let me pass on : so earn my thanks untold.

ADMETUS

Unto another's hearth thou canst not go.
[*To an attendant*] Ho thou, lead on : open the guest-halls looking
Away from these our chambers. Tell my stewards
To set on meat in plenty. Shut withal
The mid-court doors : it fits not that the guests,
The while they feast, hear wailings, and be vexed.

[*Exit* HERCULES.

CHORUS

What dost thou ?—such affliction at the door,
And guests for thee, Admetus ? Art thou mad ?

ADMETUS

But had I driven him from my home and city
Who came my guest, then hadst thou praised me more?
Nay, verily : mine affliction so had grown
No less, and more inhospitable were I !

καὶ πρὸς κακοῖσιν ἄλλο τοῦτ' ἂν ἦν κακόν,
δόμους καλεῖσθαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς κακοξένους.
αὐτὸς δ' ἀρίστου τοῦδε τυγχάνω ξένου,
ὅταν ποτ' Ἄργους διψίαν ἔλθω χθόνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς οὖν ἔκρυπτες τὸν παρόντα δαίμονα,
φίλου μολόντος ἀνδρός, ὡς αὐτὸς λέγεις;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἄν ποτ' ἠθέλησεν εἰσελθεῖν δόμους,
εἰ τῶν ἐμῶν τι πημάτων ἐγνώρισε.
καὶ τῷ μέν, οἶμαι, δρῶν τάδ' οὐ φρονεῖν δοκῶ,
οὐδ' αἰνέσει με· τἀμὰ δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται
μέλαθρ' ἀπωθεῖν οὐδ' ἀτιμάζειν ξένους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στρ. α'

ὦ πολύξεινος καὶ ἐλεύθερος ἀνδρὸς ἀεί ποτ' οἶκος,
σέ τοι καὶ ὁ Πύθιος εὐλύρας Ἀπόλλων
ἠξίωσε ναίειν,
ἔτλα δὲ σοῖσι μηλονόμας
ἐν δόμοις γενέσθαι,
δοχμιᾶν διὰ κλιτύων
βοσκήμασι σοῖσι συρίζων
ποιμνίτας ὑμεναίους.

ἀντ. α'

σὺν δ' ἐποιμαίνοντο χαρᾷ μελέων βαλιαί τε λύγκες,
ἔβα δὲ λιποῦσ' Ὄθρυος νάπαν λεόντων
ἁ δαφοινὸς ἴλα·
χόρευσε δ' ἀμφὶ σὰν κιθάραν,
Φοῖβε, ποικιλόθριξ
νεβρὸς ὑψικόμων πέραν
βαίνουσ' ἐλατᾶν σφυρῷ κούφῳ,
χαίρουσ' εὔφρονι μολπᾷ.

And to mine ills were added this beside,
That this my home were called "Guest-hating Hall."
Yea, and myself have proved him kindliest host
Whene'er to Argos' thirsty plain I fared.

CHORUS

Why hide then the dread Presence in the house,
When came a friend? Thyself hast named him friend.

ADMETUS

Never had he been won to pass my doors,
Had he one whit of mine afflictions known.
To some, I wot, not wise herein I seem,
Nor will such praise: but mine halls have not learnt
To thrust away nor to dishonour guests.

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

Halls thronged of the guests ever welcome, O dwelling
Of a hero, for ever the home of the free,
The Lord of the lyre-strings sweet beyond telling,
Apollo, hath deignèd to sojourn in thee.
Amid thine habitations, a shepherd of sheep,
The flocks of Admetus he scorned not to keep,
While the shepherds' bridal-strains, soft-swelling
From his pipe, pealed over the slant-sloped lea.

(*Ant.* 1)

And the spotted lynxes for joy of thy singing
Mixed with thy flocks; and from Othrys' dell
Trooped tawny lions: the witchery-winging
Notes brought dancing around thy shell,
Phoebus, the dappled fawn from the shadow
Of the tall-tressed pines tripping forth to the meadow,
Beating time to the chime of the rapture-ringing
Music, with light feet tranced by its spell.

τοιγὰρ πολυμηλοτάταν *στρ. β'*
ἑστίαν οἰκεῖ παρὰ καλλίναον
Βοιβίαν λίμναν· ἀρότοις δὲ γυᾶν
καὶ πεδίων δαπέδοις
ὅρον ἀμφὶ μὲν ἀελίου κνεφαίαν
ἱππόστασιν αἰθέρα τὰν Μολοσσῶν [ὀρέων] τίθεται,
πόντιον δ' Αἰγαίων' ἐπ' ἀκτὰν
ἀλίμενον Πηλίου κρατύνει.

καὶ νῦν δόμον ἀμπετάσας *ἀντ. β'*
δέξατο ξεῖνον νοτερῷ βλεφάρῳ,
τᾶς φίλας κλαίων ἀλόχου νέκυν ἐν
δώμασιν ἀρτιθανῆ·
τὸ γὰρ εὐγενὲς ἐκφέρεται πρὸς αἰδῶ.
ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖσι δὲ πάντ' ἔνεστιν σοφίας. ἄγαμαι·
πρὸς δ' ἐμᾷ ψυχᾷ θάρσος ἧσται
θεοσεβῆ φῶτα κεδνὰ πράξειν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀνδρῶν Φεραίων εὐμενὴς παρουσία,
νέκυν μὲν ἤδη πάντ' ἔχοντα πρόσπολοι
φέρουσιν ἄρδην εἰς τάφον τε καὶ πυράν·
ὑμεῖς δὲ τὴν θανοῦσαν, ὡς νομίζεται,
προσείπατ' ἐξιοῦσαν ὑστάτην ὁδόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὁρῶ σὸν πατέρα γηραιῷ ποδὶ
στείχοντ', ὀπαδούς τ' ἐν χεροῖν δάμαρτι σῇ
κόσμον φέροντας, νερτέρων ἀγάλματα.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ἥκω κακοῖσι σοῖσι συγκάμνων, τέκνον·
ἐσθλῆς γάρ, οὐδεὶς ἀντερεῖ, καὶ σώφρονος

(*Str.* 2)

Wherefore the flocks of my lord unnumbered
By the Boebian mere fair-rippling stray :
Where the steeds of the sun halt, darkness-cumbered,
By Molossian mountains, far away
The borders lie of his golden grain,
And his rolling stretches of pasture-plain ;
And the havenless beach Aegean hath slumbered
Under Pelion long 'neath the peace of his sway.

(*Ant.* 2)

And now, with the tears from his eyes fast-raining,
Wide hath he opened his doors to the guest,
While newly his heart 'neath its burden is straining,
For the wife that hath died in his halls distressed.
For to honour's heights are the high-born lifted,
And the good are with truest wisdom gifted ;
And there broods on mine heart bright trust unwaning
That the god-reverer shall yet be blest.

ADMETUS

O kindly presence of Pheraean men,
This corpse even now, with all things meet, my servants
Bear on their shoulders to the tomb and pyre.
Wherefore, as custom is, hail ye the dead,
On the last journey as she goeth forth.

CHORUS

Lo, I behold thy sire with aged foot
Advancing : his attendants in their hands
Bear ornaments to deck the dead withal.

Enter PHERES *with attendants bearing gifts.*

PHERES

I come in thine afflictions sorrowing, son :
A noble wife and virtuous hast thou lost,

γυναικὸς ἡμάρτηκας. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν
φέρειν ἀνάγκη καίπερ ὄντα δύσφορα.
δέχου δὲ κόσμον τόνδε, καὶ κατὰ χθονὸς
ἴτω· τὸ ταύτης σῶμα τιμᾶσθαι χρεών,
ἥτις γε τῆς σῆς προὔθανε ψυχῆς, τέκνον,
καί μ' οὐκ ἄπαιδ' ἔθηκεν οὐδ' εἴασε σοῦ
στερέντα γήρᾳ πενθίμῳ καταφθίνειν,
πάσαις δ' ἔθηκεν εὐκλεέστερον βίον
γυναιξίν, ἔργον τλᾶσα γενναῖον τόδε.
ὦ τόνδε μὲν σώσασ', ἀναστήσασα δὲ
ἡμᾶς πίτνοντας, χαῖρε, κἀν Ἅιδου δόμοις
εὖ σοι γένοιτο. φημὶ τοιούτους γάμους
λύειν βροτοῖσιν, ἢ γαμεῖν οὐκ ἄξιον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὔτ' ἦλθες εἰς τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ κληθεὶς τάφον,
οὔτ' ἐν φίλοισι σὴν παρουσίαν νέμω.
κόσμον δὲ τὸν σὸν οὔποθ' ἥδ' ἐνδύσεται.
οὐ γάρ τι τῶν σῶν ἐνδεὴς ταφήσεται.
τότε ξυναλγεῖν χρῆν σ' ὅτ' ὠλλύμην ἐγώ.
σὺ δ' ἐκποδὼν στὰς καὶ παρεὶς ἄλλῳ θανεῖν
νέῳ γέρων ὤν, τόνδ' ἀποιμώξει νεκρόν ;
οὐκ ἦσθ' ἄρ' ὀρθῶς τοῦδε σώματος πατήρ ;
οὐδ' ἡ τεκεῖν φάσκουσα καὶ κεκλημένη
μήτηρ μ' ἔτικτε ; δουλίου δ' ἀφ' αἵματος
μαστῷ γυναικὸς σῆς ὑπεβλήθην λάθρᾳ ;
ἔδειξας εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐξελθὼν ὃς εἶ,
καί μ' οὐ νομίζω παῖδα σὸν πεφυκέναι.
ἦ τἄρα πάντων διαπρέπεις ἀψυχίᾳ,
ὃς τηλικόσδ' ὢν κἀπὶ τέρμ' ἥκων βίου
οὐκ ἠθέλησας οὐδ' ἐτόλμησας θανεῖν
τοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδός, ἀλλὰ τήνδ' εἰάσατε
γυναῖκ' ὀθνείαν, ἣν ἐγὼ καὶ μητέρα

None will gainsay: yet these calamities
We needs must bear, how hard to bear soever.
Receive these ornaments, and let her pass
Beneath the earth: well may the corpse be honoured
Of her who for thy life's sake died, my son;
Who made me not unchilded, left me not
Forlorn of thee to pine in woeful eld.
In all her sisters' eyes she hath crowned her life
With glory, daring such a deed as this.
O saviour of my son, who hast raised us up
In act to fall, all hail! May bliss be thine
Even in Hades. Thus to wed, I say,
Profiteth men—or nothing-worth is marriage.

ADMETUS

Not bidden of me to her burial comest thou,
Nor count I thine the presence of a friend.
Thine ornaments she never shall put on;
She shall be buried needing naught of thine.
Thou grieve!—thou shouldst have grieved in my death-hour!
Thou stood'st aloof—the old, didst leave the young
To die:—and wilt thou wail upon this corpse?
Wast thou not, then, true father of my body?
Did she that said she bare me, and was called
Mother, not give me birth? Of bondman blood
To thy wife's breast was I brought privily?
Put to the test, thou showedst who thou art,
And I account me not thy true-born son.
Peerless of men in soulless cowardice!
So old, and standing on the verge of life,
Thou hadst no will, no heart hadst thou to die
For thine own son! Ye let her die, a woman
Not of our house, whom I with righteous cause

πατέρα τ' ἂν ἐνδίκως ἂν ἡγοίμην μόνην.
καίτοι καλόν γ' ἂν τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ἠγωνίσω
τοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδὸς κατθανών, βραχὺς δέ σοι
πάντως ὁ λοιπὸς ἦν βιώσιμος χρόνος.
[κἀγώ τ' ἂν ἔζων χἥδε τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον,
κοὐκ ἂν μονωθεὶς ἔστενον κακοῖς ἐμοῖς.]
καὶ μὴν ὅσ' ἄνδρα χρὴ παθεῖν εὐδαίμονα
πέπονθας· ἥβησας μὲν ἐν τυραννίδι,
παῖς δ' ἦν ἐγώ σοι τῶνδε διάδοχος δόμων,
ὥστ' οὐκ ἄτεκνος κατθανὼν ἄλλοις δόμον
λείψειν ἔμελλες ὀρφανὸν διαρπάσαι.
οὐ μὴν ἐρεῖς γέ μ' ὡς ἀτιμάζων τὸ σὸν
γῆρας θανεῖν προὔδωκά σ', ὅστις αἰδόφρων
πρὸς σ' ἦ μάλιστα· κἀντὶ τῶνδέ μοι χάριν
τοιάνδε καὶ σὺ χἠ τεκοῦσ' ἠλλαξάτην.
τοιγὰρ φυτεύων παῖδας οὐκέτ' ἂν φθάνοις,
οἳ γηροβοσκήσουσι καὶ θανόντα σε
περιστελοῦσι καὶ προθήσονται νεκρόν.
οὐ γάρ σ' ἔγωγε τῇδ' ἐμῇ θάψω χερί·
τέθνηκα γὰρ δὴ τοὐπὶ σ'· εἰ δ' ἄλλου τυχὼν
σωτῆρος αὐγὰς εἰσορῶ, κείνου λέγω
καὶ παῖδά μ' εἶναι καὶ φίλον γηροτρόφον.
μάτην ἄρ' οἱ γέροντες εὔχονται θανεῖν,
γῆρας ψέγοντες καὶ μακρὸν χρόνον βίου·
ἢν δ' ἐγγὺς ἔλθῃ θάνατος, οὐδεὶς βούλεται
θνῄσκειν, τὸ γῆρας δ' οὐκέτ' ἔστ' αὐτοῖς βαρύ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παύσασθ', ἅλις γὰρ ἡ παροῦσα συμφορά,
ὦ παῖ· πατρὸς δὲ μὴ παροξύνῃς φρένας.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ὦ παῖ, τίν' αὐχεῖς, πότερα Λυδὸν ἢ Φρύγα
κακοῖς ἐλαύνειν ἀργυρώνητον σέθεν;

Might count alone my mother and my father.
Yet here was honour, hadst thou dared the strife,
In dying for thy son. A paltry space
To cling to life in any wise was left.
Then had I lived, and she, through days to come,
Nor I, left lorn, should thus mine ills bemoan.
Yet all that may the fortunate betide
Fell to thy lot; in manhood's prime a king,
Me hadst thou son and heir unto thine house,
So that thou wast not, dying, like to leave
A childless home for stranger folk to spoil.

Nor canst thou say that flouting thy grey hairs
I had giv'n thee up to death, whose reverence
For thee was passing word:—and this the thank
That thou and she that bare me render me!
Wherefore, make haste: beget thee other sons
To foster thy grey hairs, to compass thee
With death's observance, and lay out thy corpse.
Not I with this mine hand will bury thee.
For thee dead am I. If I see the light,—
Another saviour found,—I call me son
To him, and loving fosterer of his age.
With false lips pray the old for death's release,
Plaining of age and weary-wearing time.
Let death draw near—who hails his coming? None:
No more is eld a burden unto them.

CHORUS

O hush! Suffice the affliction at the doors.
O son, infuriate not thy father's soul.

PHERES

Son, whom, think'st thou—some Lydian slave or
Phrygian
Bought with thy money?—thus beratest thou?

οὐκ οἶσθα Θεσσαλόν με κἀπὸ Θεσσαλοῦ
πατρὸς γεγῶτα γνησίως ἐλεύθερον;
ἄγαν ὑβρίζεις, καὶ νεανίας λόγους
ῥίπτων ἐς ἡμᾶς οὐ βαλὼν οὕτως ἄπει.
ἐγὼ δέ σ' οἴκων δεσπότην ἐγεινάμην
κἄθρεψ', ὀφείλω δ' οὐχ ὑπερθνῄσκειν σέθεν·
οὐ γὰρ πατρῷον τόνδ' ἐδεξάμην νόμον,
παίδων προθνῄσκειν πατέρας, οὐδ' Ἑλληνικόν.
σαυτῷ γὰρ εἴτε δυστυχὴς εἴτ' εὐτυχὴς
ἔφυς· ἃ δ' ἡμῶν χρῆν σε τυγχάνειν, ἔχεις.
πολλῶν μὲν ἄρχεις, πολυπλέθρους δέ σοι γύας
λείψω· πατρὸς γὰρ ταῦτ' ἐδεξάμην πάρα.
τί δῆτά σ' ἠδίκηκα; τοῦ σ' ἀποστερῶ;
μὴ θνῆσχ' ὑπὲρ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, οὐδ' ἐγὼ πρὸ σοῦ.
χαίρεις ὁρῶν φῶς· πατέρα δ' οὐ χαίρειν δοκεῖς;
ἦ μὴν πολύν γε τὸν κάτω λογίζομαι
χρόνον, τὸ δὲ ζῆν μικρόν, ἀλλ' ὅμως γλυκύ.
σὺ γοῦν ἀναιδῶς διεμάχου τὸ μὴ θανεῖν,
καὶ ζῇς παρελθὼν τὴν πεπρωμένην τύχην,
ταύτην κατακτάς· εἶτ' ἐμὴν ἀψυχίαν
λέγεις, γυναικός, ὦ κάκισθ', ἡσσημένος,
ἣ τοῦ καλοῦ σοῦ προὔθανεν νεανίου;
σοφῶς δ' ἐφηῦρες ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν ποτε,
εἰ τὴν παροῦσαν κατθανεῖν πείσεις ἀεὶ
γυναῖχ' ὑπὲρ σοῦ· κᾆτ' ὀνειδίζεις φίλοις
τοῖς μὴ θέλουσι δρᾶν τάδ', αὐτὸς ὢν κακός;
σίγα· νόμιζε δ', εἰ σὺ τὴν σαυτοῦ φιλεῖς
ψυχήν, φιλεῖν ἅπαντας· εἰ δ' ἡμᾶς κακῶς
ἐρεῖς, ἀκούσει πολλὰ κοὐ ψευδῆ κακά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πλείω λέλεκται νῦν τε καὶ τὰ πρὶν κακά·
παῦσαι δέ, πρέσβυ, παῖδα σὸν κακορροθῶν.

What, know'st thou not that I Thessalian am,
Sprung from Thessalian sire, free man true-born?
This insolence passeth!—hurling malapert words
On me, not lightly thus shalt thou come off!

Thee I begat and nurtured, of mine house
The heir: no debt is mine to die for thee.
Not from my sires such custom I received
That sires for sons should die: no Greek law this.
Born for thyself wast thou, to fortune good
Or evil: all thy dues from me thou hast.
O'er many folk thou rulest; wide demesnes
Shall I leave thee: to me my father left them.
What is my wrong, my robbery of thee?
For me die thou not, I die not for thee.
Thou joy'st to see light—shall thy father joy not?
Sooth, I account our time beneath the earth
Long, and our life-space short, yet is it sweet.
Shamelessly hast thou fought against thy death:
Thy life is but transgression of thy doom
And murder of thy wife! *My* cowardice!—
This from thee, dastard, by a woman outdone
Who died for thee, the glorious-gallant youth!

Cunning device hast thou devised to die
Never, cajoling still wife after wife
To die for thee!—and dost revile thy friends
Who will not so—and thou the coward, thou?
Peace! e'en bethink thee, if thou lov'st thy life,
So all love theirs. Thou, if thou speakest evil
Of us, shalt hear much evil, and that true.

CHORUS

Ye have said too much, thou now, and he before.
Refrain, old sire, from railing on thy son.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
λέγ', ὡς ἐμοῦ λέξαντος· εἰ δ' ἀλγεῖς κλύων
τἀληθές, οὐ χρῆν σ' εἰς ἔμ' ἐξαμαρτάνειν.

ΦΕΡΗΣ
σοῦ δ' ἂν προθνῄσκων μᾶλλον ἐξημάρτανον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ταὐτὸν γὰρ ἡβῶντ' ἄνδρα καὶ πρέσβυν θανεῖν;

ΦΕΡΗΣ
ψυχῇ μιᾷ ζῆν, οὐ δυοῖν ὀφείλομεν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
καὶ μὴν Διός γε μείζονα ζῴης χρόνον.

ΦΕΡΗΣ
ἀρᾷ γονεῦσιν οὐδὲν ἔκδικον παθών;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
μακροῦ βίου γὰρ ᾐσθόμην ἐρῶντά σε.

ΦΕΡΗΣ
ἀλλ' οὐ σὺ νεκρόν γ' ἀντὶ σοῦ τόνδ' ἐκφέρεις;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
σημεῖα τῆς σῆς, ὦ κάκιστ', ἀψυχίας.

ΦΕΡΗΣ
οὔτοι πρὸς ἡμῶν γ' ὤλετ'· οὐκ ἐρεῖς τόδε.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
φεῦ·
εἴθ' ἀνδρὸς ἔλθοις τοῦδέ γ' εἰς χρείαν ποτέ.

ΦΕΡΗΣ
μνήστευε πολλάς, ὡς θάνωσι πλείονες.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
σοὶ τοῦτ' ὄνειδος· οὐ γὰρ ἤθελες θανεῖν.

ΦΕΡΗΣ
φίλον τὸ φέγγος τοῦτο τοῦ θεοῦ, φίλον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
κακὸν τὸ λῆμα κοὐκ ἐν ἀνδράσιν τὸ σόν.

ADMETUS

Say on, say on ; I have said : if hearing truth
Gall thee, thou shouldest not have done me wrong.

PHERES

I had done more wrong, had I died for thee.

ADMETUS

What, for the young and old is death the same?

PHERES

One life to live, not twain—this is our due.

ADMETUS

Have thy desire—one life outlasting Zeus.

PHERES

Dost curse thy parents, who hast had no wrong?

ADMETUS

Ay, whom I marked love-sick for dateless life.

PHERES

What?—art not burying her in thine own stead?

ADMETUS

A token, dastard, of thy cowardice.

PHERES

I did her not to death : thou canst not say it.

ADMETUS

Mayest thou feel thy need of me some day!

PHERES

Woo many women, that the more may die.

ADMETUS

This taunt strikes thee—'tis thou wast loth to die.

PHERES

Sweet is yon sun-god's light, yea, it is sweet.

ADMETUS

Base is thy spirit, and unmeet for men.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

οὐκ ἐγγελᾷς γέροντα βαστάζων νεκρόν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θανεῖ γε μέντοι δυσκλεής, ὅταν θάνῃς.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

κακῶς ἀκούειν οὐ μέλει θανόντι μοι.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ γῆρας ὡς ἀναιδείας πλέων.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ἥδ' οὐκ ἀναιδής· τήνδ' ἐφηῦρες ἄφρονα.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἄπελθε κἀμὲ τόνδ' ἔα θάψαι νεκρόν.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ἄπειμι· θάψεις δ' αὐτὸς ὢν αὐτῆς φονεύς,
δίκας τε δώσεις τοῖσι κηδεσταῖς ἔτι.
ἦ τἄρ' Ἄκαστος οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν,
εἰ μή σ' ἀδελφῆς αἷμα τιμωρήσεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔρρων νυν αὐτὸς χἠ ξυνοικήσασά σοι,
ἄπαιδε παιδὸς ὄντος, ὥσπερ ἄξιοι,
γηράσκετ'· οὐ γὰρ τῷδέ γ' εἰς ταὐτὸν στέγος
νεῖσθ'· εἰ δ' ἀπειπεῖν χρῆν με κηρύκων ὕπο
τὴν σὴν πατρῴαν ἑστίαν, ἀπεῖπον ἄν.
ἡμεῖς δέ, τοὐν ποσὶν γὰρ οἰστέον κακόν,
στείχωμεν, ὡς ἂν ἐν πυρᾷ θῶμεν νεκρόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰώ. σχετλία τόλμης,
ὦ γενναία καὶ μέγ' ἀρίστη,
χαῖρε· πρόφρων σὲ χθόνιός θ' Ἑρμῆς
Ἅιδης τε δέχοιτ'. εἰ δέ τι κἀκεῖ

PHERES

Not mine old corpse to the grave thou bear'st with glee!

ADMETUS

Yet, when thou diest, in ill fame shalt thou die.

PHERES

Ill fame is naught to me when I have died.

ADMETUS

Hear him! how full of shamelessness is eld!

PHERES

Not shameless she,—but senseless hast thou found her.

ADMETUS

Begone: leave me to bury this my dead.

PHERES

I go: her murderer will bury her!
Thou shalt yet answer for it to her kin.
Surely Acastus is no more a man,
If he of thee claim not his sister's blood. [*Exit.*

ADMETUS

Avaunt, with her that kennelleth with thee!
Childless grow old, as ye deserve, while lives
Your child: ye shall not come beneath one roof
With me. If need were to renounce by heralds
Thine hearth paternal, I had renounced it now.
Let us—for we must bear the present ill—
Pass on, to lay our dead upon the pyre.

CHORUS

Alas for the loving and daring!
  Farewell to the noblest and best!
May Hermes conduct thee down-faring
  Kindly, and Hades to rest

πλέον ἔστ' ἀγαθοῖς, τούτων μετέχουσ'
Ἅιδου νύμφῃ παρεδρεύοις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πολλοὺς μὲν ἤδη κἀπὸ παντοίας χθονὸς
ξένους μολόντας οἶδ' ἐς Ἀδμήτου δόμους,
οἷς δεῖπνα προὔθηκ'· ἀλλὰ τοῦδ' οὔπω ξένου
κακίον' εἰς τήνδ' ἑστίαν ἐδεξάμην.
ὃς πρῶτα μὲν πενθοῦντα δεσπότην ὁρῶν
εἰσῆλθε κἀτόλμησ' ἀμείψασθαι πύλας.
ἔπειτα δ' οὔτι σωφρόνως ἐδέξατο
τὰ προστυχόντα ξένια, συμφορὰν μαθών,
ἀλλ' εἴ τι μὴ φέροιμεν, ὤτρυνεν φέρειν.
ποτῆρα δ' ἐν χείρεσσι κίσσινον λαβὼν
πίνει μελαίνης μητρὸς εὔζωρον μέθυ,
ἕως ἐθέρμην' αὐτὸν ἀμφιβᾶσα φλὸξ
οἴνου· στέφει δὲ κρᾶτα μυρσίνης κλάδοις
ἄμουσ' ὑλακτῶν· δισσὰ δ' ἦν μέλη κλύειν·
ὁ μὲν γὰρ ᾖδε, τῶν ἐν Ἀδμήτου κακῶν
οὐδὲν προτιμῶν, οἰκέται δ' ἐκλαίομεν
δέσποιναν· ὄμμα δ' οὐκ ἐδείκνυμεν ξένῳ
τέγγοντες· Ἄδμητος γὰρ ὧδ' ἐφίετο.
καὶ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν ἐν δόμοισιν ἑστιῶ
ξένον, πανοῦργον κλῶπα καὶ λῃστήν τινα,
ἡ δ' ἐκ δόμων βέβηκεν, οὐδ' ἐφεσπόμην
οὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ', ἀποιμώζων ἐμὴν
δέσποιναν, ἣ 'μοὶ πᾶσί τ' οἰκέταισιν ἦν
μήτηρ· κακῶν γὰρ μυρίων ἐρρύετο,
ὀργὰς μαλάσσουσ' ἀνδρός. ἆρα τὸν ξένον
στυγῶ δικαίως, ἐν κακοῖς ἀφιγμένον;

Receive thee! If any atonement
For ills even there may betide
To the good, O thine be enthronement
By Hades' bride!

[*Exeunt* OMNES *in funeral procession.*

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT

Full many a guest, from many a land which came
Unto Admetus' dwelling, have I known,
Have set before them meat: but never guest
More pestilent received I to this hearth:
Who first, albeit he saw my master mourning,
Entered, and passed the threshold unashamed;
Then, nowise courteously received the fare
Found with us, though our woeful plight he knew,
But, what we brought not, hectoring bade us bring.
The ivy cup uplifts he in his hands,
And swills the darkling mother's fiery blood,
Till the wine's flame enwrapped him, heating him.
Then did he wreathe his head with myrtle sprays,
Dissonant-howling. Diverse strains were heard:
For he sang on, regardless all of ills
Darkening Admetus' house; we servants wept
Our mistress: yet we showed not to the guest
Eyes tear-bedewed, for so Admetus bade.
And now within the house must I be feasting
This guest,—a lawless thief, a bandit rogue,
While forth the house she is borne! I followed not,
Nor stretched the hand, nor wailed unto my mistress
Farewell, who was to me and all the household
A mother; for from ills untold she saved us,
Assuaging her lord's wrath. Do I not well
To loathe this guest, intruder on our griefs?

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὗτος, τί σεμνὸν καὶ πεφροντικὸς βλέπεις;
οὐ χρὴ σκυθρωπὸν τοῖς ξένοις τὸν πρόσπολον
εἶναι, δέχεσθαι δ' εὐπροσηγόρῳ φρενί.
σὺ δ' ἄνδρ' ἑταῖρον δεσπότου παρόνθ' ὁρῶν,
στυγνῷ προσώπῳ καὶ συνωφρυωμένῳ
δέχει, θυραίου πήματος σπουδὴν ἔχων.
δεῦρ' ἔλθ', ὅπως ἂν καὶ σοφώτερος γένῃ.
τὰ θνητὰ πράγματ' οἶδας ἣν ἔχει φύσιν;
οἶμαι μὲν οὔ· πόθεν γάρ; ἀλλ' ἄκουέ μου.
βροτοῖς ἅπασι κατθανεῖν ὀφείλεται,
κοὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἐξεπίσταται
τὴν αὔριον μέλλουσαν εἰ βιώσεται·
τὸ τῆς τύχης γὰρ ἀφανὲς οἷ προβήσεται,
κἄστ' οὐ διδακτὸν οὐδ' ἁλίσκεται τέχνῃ.
ταῦτ' οὖν ἀκούσας καὶ μαθὼν ἐμοῦ πάρα,
εὔφραινε σαυτόν, πῖνε, τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν
βίον λογίζου σόν, τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῆς τύχης.
τίμα δὲ καὶ τὴν πλεῖστον ἡδίστην θεῶν
Κύπριν βροτοῖσιν· εὐμενὴς γὰρ ἡ θεός.
τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔασον ταῦτα καὶ πιθοῦ λόγοις
ἐμοῖσιν, εἴπερ ὀρθά σοι δοκῶ λέγειν·
οἶμαι μέν. οὔκουν τὴν ἄγαν λύπην ἀφεὶς
πίει μεθ' ἡμῶν τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν τύχας,
στεφάνοις πυκασθείς; καὶ σάφ' οἶδ' ὁθούνεκα
τοῦ νῦν σκυθρωποῦ καὶ ξυνεστῶτος φρενῶν
μεθορμιεῖ σε πίτυλος ἐμπεσὼν σκύφου.
ὄντας δὲ θνητοὺς θνητὰ καὶ φρονεῖν χρεών,
ὡς τοῖς γε σεμνοῖς καὶ συνωφρυωμένοις
ἅπασίν ἐστιν, ὥς γ' ἐμοὶ χρῆσθαι κριτῇ,
οὐ βίος ἀληθῶς ὁ βίος, ἀλλὰ συμφορά.

Enter HERCULES.

HERCULES

Ho, fellow, why this solemn brooding look?
The servant should not lower upon the guest,
But welcome him with kindly-beaming cheer.
Thou, seeing here in presence thy lord's friend,
With visage sour and cloud of knitted brows
Receiv'st him, fretting o'er an alien grief.
Hither to me, that wiser thou mayst grow.
The lot of man—its nature knowest thou?
I trow not: how shouldst thou? Give ear to me.

From all mankind the debt of death is due,
Nor of all mortals is there one that knows
If through the coming morrow he shall live:
For trackless is the way of fortune's feet,
Not to be taught, nor won by art of man.
This hearing then, and learning it from me,
Make merry, drink: the life from day to day
Account thine own, all else in fortune's power.

Honour withal the sweetest of the Gods
To men, the Cyprian Queen—a gracious Goddess!
Away with other thoughts, and heed my words,
If thou dost think I speak wise words and true:
So think I. Hence with sorrow overwrought;
Rise above this affliction: drink with me,
Thy brows with garlands bound. Full well I wot,
From all this lowering spirit prison-pent
Thine anchor shall Sir Beaker's plash upheave.
What, man!—the mortal must be mortal-minded.
So, for your solemn wights of knitted brows,
For each and all,—if thou for judge wilt take me,—
Life is not truly life, but mere affliction.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἐπιστάμεσθα ταῦτα· νῦν δὲ πράσσομεν
οὐχ οἷα κώμου καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γυνὴ θυραῖος ἡ θανοῦσα· μὴ λίαν
πένθει· δόμων γὰρ ζῶσι τῶνδε δεσπόται.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί ζῶσιν; οὐ κάτοισθα τὰν δόμοις κακά;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰ μή τι σός με δεσπότης ἐψεύσατο.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἄγαν ἐκεῖνός ἐστ' ἄγαν φιλόξενος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ χρῆν μ' ὀθνείου γ' εἵνεκ' εὖ πάσχειν νεκροῦ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἦ κάρτα μέντοι καὶ λίαν θυραῖος ἦν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μῶν ξυμφοράν τιν' οὖσαν οὐκ ἔφραζέ μοι;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

χαίρων ἴθ'. ἡμῖν δεσποτῶν μέλει κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὅδ' οὐ θυραίων πημάτων ἄρχει λόγος.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐ γάρ τι κωμάζοντ' ἂν ἠχθόμην σ' ὁρῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ πέπονθα δείν' ὑπὸ ξένων ἐμῶν;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἦλθες ἐν δέοντι δέξασθαι δόμοις·
πένθος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐστι· καὶ κουρὰν βλέπεις
μελαμπέπλους στολμούς τε.

SERVANT

All this we know: but now are we in plight
Not meet for laughter and for revelry.

HERCULES

The woman dead is alien-born: grieve not
Exceeding much. Yet live the household's lords.

SERVANT

Live, quotha!—know'st thou not the house's ills?

HERCULES

Yea, if thy master lied not unto me.

SERVANT

Guest-fain he is—ah, guest-fain overmuch!

HERCULES

A stranger dead—and no guest-cheer for me?

SERVANT

O yea, an alien—overmuch an alien!

HERCULES

Ha! was he keeping some affliction back?

SERVANT

Go thou in peace: our lords' ills are for us.

Turns away; but HERCULES *seizes him, and makes him face him.*

HERCULES

Grief for a stranger—such words mean not that!

SERVANT

Else had I not sore vexed beheld thy revel.

HERCULES

How! have I sorry handling of mine hosts?

SERVANT

Thou cam'st in hour unmeet for welcoming,
For grief is on us; and thou see'st shorn hair
And vesture of black robes.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τίς δ' ὁ κατθανών;
μῶν ἢ τέκνων τι φροῦδον ἢ πατὴρ γέρων;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

γυνὴ μὲν οὖν ὄλωλεν Ἀδμήτου, ξένε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φής; ἔπειτα δῆτά μ' ἐξενίζετε;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ᾐδεῖτο γάρ σε τῶνδ' ἀπώσασθαι δόμων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ σχέτλι', οἵας ἤμπλακες ξυναόρου.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἀπωλόμεσθα πάντες, οὐ κείνη μόνη.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ᾐσθόμην μὲν ὄμμ' ἰδὼν δακρυρροοῦν
κουράν τε καὶ πρόσωπον· ἀλλ' ἔπειθέ με
λέγων θυραῖον κῆδος εἰς τάφον φέρειν.
βίᾳ δὲ θυμοῦ τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν πύλας
ἔπινον ἀνδρὸς ἐν φιλοξένου δόμοις
πράσσοντος οὕτω. κᾆτα κωμάζω κάρα
στεφάνοις πυκασθείς; ἀλλὰ σοῦ τὸ μὴ φράσαι,
κακοῦ τοσούτου δώμασιν προσκειμένου.
ποῦ καί σφε θάπτει; ποῦ νιν εὑρήσω μολών;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὀρθὴν παρ' οἶμον, ἣ 'πὶ Λάρισαν φέρει,
τύμβον κατόψει ξεστὸν ἐκ προαστίου.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ πολλὰ τλᾶσα καρδία καὶ χεὶρ ἐμή,
νῦν δεῖξον οἷον παῖδά σ' ἡ Τιρυνθία
Ἠλεκτρυόνος ἐγείνατ' Ἀλκμήνη Διί.
δεῖ γάρ με σῶσαι τὴν θανοῦσαν ἀρτίως

HERCULES

But who hath died?
Not of the children one, or grey-haired sire?

SERVANT

Nay, but Admetus' wife is dead, O guest.

HERCULES

How say'st thou?—Ha, even then ye gave me welcome?

SERVANT

For shame he could not thrust thee from these doors

HERCULES

O hapless! what a helpmeet hast thou lost!

SERVANT

We have all perished, and not she alone.

HERCULES

I felt it, when I saw his tear-drowned eyes,
His shaven hair, his face: yet he prevailed,
Saying he bare a stranger-friend to burial.
I passed this threshold in mine heart's despite,
And drank in halls of him that loves the guest,
When thus his plight! And am I revelling
With wreathed head? O my friend, that thou shouldst say
Naught, when on thine home such affliction lay! . . .
Where doth he bury her? Where shall I find her?

SERVANT

By the straight path that leads Larissa-wards
Shalt see the hewn-stone tomb without the walls.

HERCULES

O much-enduring heart and hand of mine,
Now show what son the Lady of Tiryns bare,
Electryon's child Alcmena, unto Zeus.
For I must save the woman newly dead,

γυναῖκα κεἰς τόνδ᾽ αὖθις ἱδρῦσαι δόμον
Ἄλκηστιν, Ἀδμήτῳ θ᾽ ὑπουργῆσαι χάριν.
ἐλθὼν δ᾽ ἄνακτα τὸν μελάμπεπλον νεκρῶν
Θάνατον φυλάξω, καί νιν εὑρήσειν δοκῶ
πίνοντα τύμβου πλησίον προσφαγμάτων.
κἄνπερ λοχαίας αὐτὸν ἐξ ἕδρας συθεὶς
μάρψω, κύκλον δὲ περιβαλῶ χεροῖν ἐμαῖν,
οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις αὐτὸν ἐξαιρήσεται
μογοῦντα πλευρά, πρὶν γυναῖκ᾽ ἐμοὶ μεθῇ.
ἢν δ᾽ οὖν ἁμάρτω τῆσδ᾽ ἄγρας, καὶ μὴ μόλῃ
πρὸς αἱματηρὸν πέλανον, εἶμι τῶν κάτω
Κόρης Ἄνακτός τ᾽ εἰς ἀνηλίους δόμους
αἰτήσομαί τε· καὶ πέποιθ᾽ ἄξειν ἄνω
Ἄλκηστιν, ὥστε χερσὶν ἐνθεῖναι ξένου,
ὅς μ᾽ εἰς δόμους ἐδέξατ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἀπήλασε,
καίπερ βαρείᾳ συμφορᾷ πεπληγμένος,
ἔκρυπτε δ᾽ ὢν γενναῖος, αἰδεσθεὶς ἐμέ.
τίς τοῦδε μᾶλλον Θεσσαλῶν φιλόξενος,
τίς Ἑλλάδ᾽ οἰκῶν; τοιγὰρ οὐκ ἐρεῖ κακὸν
εὐεργετῆσαι φῶτα γενναῖος γεγώς.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἰώ. στυγναὶ πρόσοδοι, στυγναὶ δ᾽ ὄψεις
χήρων μελάθρων· ἰώ μοί μοι. αἰαῖ.
ποῖ βῶ; πᾷ στῶ; τί λέγω; τί δὲ μή;

πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμαν;
ἦ βαρυδαίμονα μήτηρ μ᾽ ἔτεκεν.
ζηλῶ φθιμένους, κείνων ἔραμαι,
κεῖν᾽ ἐπιθυμῶ δώματα ναίειν.

And set Alcestis in this house again,
And render to Admetus good for good.
I go. The sable-vestured King of Corpses,
Death, will I watch for, and shall find, I trow,
Drinking the death-draught hard beside the tomb.
And if I lie in wait, and dart from ambush,
And seize, and with mine arms' coil compass him,
None is there shall deliver from mine hands
His straining sides, ere he yield up his prey.
Yea, though I miss the quarry, and he come not
Unto the blood-clot, to the sunless homes
Down will I fare of Cora and her King,
And make demand. I doubt not I shall lead
Alcestis up, and give to mine host's hands,
Who to his halls received, nor drave me thence,
Albeit smitten with affliction sore,
But hid it, like a prince, respecting me.
Who is more guest-fain of Thessalians?
Who in all Hellas? O, he shall not say
That one so princely showed a base man kindness.

[*Exit.*

Enter ADMETUS, *with* CHORUS *and Attendants, returning from the funeral.*

ADMETUS

O hateful returning!
O hateful to see
Drear halls full of yearning
For the lost—ah me!
What aim or what rest have I?—silence or speech, of what help shall they be?
Would God I were dead!
O, I came from the womb
To a destiny dread!
Ah, those in the tomb—

οὔτε γὰρ αὐγὰς χαίρω προσορῶν,
οὔτ' ἐπὶ γαίας πόδα πεζεύων·
τοῖον ὅμηρόν μ' ἀποσυλήσας
Ἅιδῃ Θάνατος παρέδωκεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρόβα πρόβα. βᾶθι κεῦθος οἴκων. στρ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

αἰαῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πέπονθας ἄξι' αἰαγμάτων.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἒ ἔ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας,
σάφ' οἶδα.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰν νέρθεν οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖς.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὸ μήποτ' εἰσιδεῖν φιλίας ἀλόχου
πρόσωπον ἄντα λυπρόν.

How I envy them! How I desire them, and long to abide in their home!
To mine eyes nothing sweet
Is the light of the heaven,
Nor the earth to my feet;
Such a helpmeet is riven
By Death from my side, and my darling to Hades the spoiler hath given.

CHORUS

Pass on thou, and hide thee (*Str.*)
In thy chambers.

ADMETUS

Ah woe!

CHORUS

Wail the griefs that betide thee:
How canst thou but so?

ADMETUS

O God!

CHORUS

Thou hast passed through deep waters of anguish—I know it, I know.

ADMETUS

Woe! darkest of days!

CHORUS

No help bringeth this
To thy love in that place.

ADMETUS

Woe!

CHORUS

Bitter it is
The face of a wife well-belovèd for ever and ever to miss.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔμνησας ὅ μου φρένας ἥλκωσεν·
τί γὰρ ἀνδρὶ κακὸν μεῖζον ἁμαρτεῖν
πιστῆς ἀλόχου; μή ποτε γήμας
ὤφελον οἰκεῖν μετὰ τῆσδε δόμους.

ζηλῶ δ' ἀγάμους ἀτέκνους τε βροτῶν·
μία γὰρ ψυχή, τῆς ὑπεραλγεῖν
μέτριον ἄχθος·

παίδων δὲ νόσους καὶ νυμφιδίους
εὐνὰς θανάτοις κεραϊζομένας
οὐ τλητὸν ὁρᾶν, ἐξὸν ἀτέκνους
ἀγάμους τ' εἶναι διὰ παντός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τύχα τύχα δυσπάλαιστος ἥκει· ἀντ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

αἰαῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πέρας δέ γ' οὐδὲν ἀλγῶν τίθης.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἒ ἔ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βαρέα μὲν φέρειν,
ὅμως δὲ—

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ.

ADMETUS

Thou hast stricken mine heart
Where the wound will not heal.
What is worse than to part
From the loving and leal?
Would God I had wedded her not, home-bliss with Alcestis to feel!
O, I envy the lot
Of the man without wife,
Without child: single-wrought
Is the strand of his life:
No soul-crushing burden of sorrow, no strength-overmastering strife.
But that children should sicken,
That gloom of despair
Over bride-beds should thicken,
What spirit can bear,
When childless, unwedded, a man through life's calm journey might fare?

CHORUS

Thee Fortune hath met, (*Ant.*)
Strong wrestler, and thrown;
Yet no bounds hast thou set—

ADMETUS

Woe's me!—

CHORUS

To thy moan.
O, thy burden is heavy!

ADMETUS

Alas!

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τλᾶθ᾽· οὐ σὺ πρῶτος ὤλεσας—

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γυναῖκα· συμφορὰ δ᾽ ἑτέρους ἑτέρα
πιέζει φανεῖσα θνατῶν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ μακρὰ πένθη λῦπαί τε φίλων
τῶν ὑπὸ γαῖαν.
τί μ᾽ ἐκώλυσας ῥῖψαι τύμβου
τάφρον εἰς κοίλην καὶ μετ᾽ ἐκείνης
τῆς μέγ᾽ ἀρίστης κεῖσθαι φθίμενον;

δύο δ᾽ ἀντὶ μιᾶς Ἅιδης ψυχὰς
τὰς πιστοτάτας σὺν ἂν ἔσχεν, ὁμοῦ
χθονίαν λίμνην διαβάντε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμοί τις ἦν στρ.
ἐν γένει, ᾧ κόρος ἀξιόθρηνος
ὤλετ᾽ ἐν δόμοισιν
μονόπαις· ἀλλ᾽ ἔμπας
ἔφερε κακὸν ἅλις, ἄτεκνος ὤν,
πολιὰς ἐπὶ χαίτας

CHORUS

Yet endure it : thou art not alone.
Not thou art the first
Of bereaved ones.

ADMETUS

Ah me!

CHORUS

Such tempest hath burst
Upon many ere thee.
Unto each his mischance, when the surges roll up from
Calamity's sea.

ADMETUS

O long grief and pain
For belovèd ones passed!
Why didst thou restrain,
When myself I had cast
Down into her grave, with the noblest to lie peace-
lulled at the last?
Not one soul, but two
Had been Hades' prey,
Souls utterly true
United for aye,
Which together o'er waves of the underworld-mere
had passed this day.

CHORUS

Of my kin was there one, (*Str.*)
And the life's light failed
In his halls of a son,
One meet to be wailed, [prevailed;
His only belovèd : howbeit the manhood within him
And the ills heaven-sent
As a man did he bear,
Though by this was he bent
Unto silvered hair,

ἤδη προπετὴς ὢν
βιότου τε πόρσω.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ σχῆμα δόμων, πῶς εἰσέλθω ;
πῶς δ' οἰκήσω μεταπίπτοντος
δαίμονος; οἴμοι. πολὺ γὰρ τὸ μέσον·

τότε μὲν πεύκαις σὺν Πηλιάσιν
σύν θ' ὑμεναίοις ἔστειχον ἔσω,
φιλίας ἀλόχου χέρα βαστάζων·

πολυάχητος δ' εἵπετο κῶμος,
τήν τε θανοῦσαν κἄμ' ὀλβίζων,
ὡς εὐπατρίδαι καὶ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων
ὄντες ἀριστέων σύζυγες ἦμεν.

νῦν δ' ὑμεναίων γόος ἀντίπαλος
λευκῶν τε πέπλων μέλανες στολμοὶ
πέμπουσί μ' ἔσω
λέκτρων κοίτας ἐς ἐρήμους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παρ' εὐτυχῆ ἀντ.
σοὶ πότμον ἦλθεν ἀπειροκάκῳ τόδ'
ἄλγος· ἀλλ' ἔσωσας
βίοτον καὶ ψυχάν.

Far on in life's path, without son for his remnant of weakness to care.

ADMETUS

O, how can I tread
Thy threshold, fair home?
How shelter mine head
'Neath thy roof, now the doom
Of my fate's dice changeth?—ah me, what change upon all things is come!
For with torches aflame
Of the Pelian pine,
And with bride-song I came
In that hour divine,
Upbearing the hand of a wife—thine hand, O darling mine!
Followed revellers, raising
Acclaim: ever broke
From the lips of them praising,
Of the dead as they spoke,
And of me, how the noble, the children of kings,
Love joined 'neath his yoke.
But for bridal song
Is the wail for the dead,
And, for white-robed throng,
Black vesture hath led
Me to halls where the ghost of delight lieth couched on a desolate bed.

CHORUS

To the trance of thy bliss (*Ant.*)
Sudden anguish was brought.
Never lesson like this
To thine heart had been taught:
Yet thy life hast thou won, and thy soul hast delivered from death:—is it naught?

ἔθανε δάμαρ, ἔλιπε φιλίαν·
τί νέον τόδε; πολλοὺς
ἤδη παρέλυσεν
θάνατος δάμαρτος.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φίλοι, γυναικὸς δαίμον' εὐτυχέστερον
τοὐμοῦ νομίζω, καίπερ οὐ δοκοῦνθ' ὅμως·
τῆς μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἅψεταί ποτε,
πολλῶν δὲ μόχθων εὐκλεὴς ἐπαύσατο.
ἐγὼ δ', ὃν οὐ χρῆν ζῆν, παρεὶς τὸ μόρσιμον
λυπρὸν διάξω βίοτον· ἄρτι μανθάνω.
πῶς γὰρ δόμων τῶνδ' εἰσόδους ἀνέξομαι;
τίν' ἂν προσειπών, τοῦ δὲ προσρηθεὶς ὕπο
τερπνῆς τύχοιμ' ἂν εἰσόδου; ποῖ τρέψομαι;
ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἔνδον ἐξελᾷ μ' ἐρημία,
γυναικὸς εὐνὰς εὖτ' ἂν εἰσίδω κενὰς
θρόνους τ' ἐν οἷσιν ἷζε, καὶ κατὰ στέγας
αὐχμηρὸν οὖδας, τέκνα δ' ἀμφὶ γούνασι
πίπτοντα κλαίῃ μητέρ', οἱ δὲ δεσπότιν
στένωσιν οἵαν ἐκ δόμων ἀπώλεσαν.
τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκους τοιάδ'· ἔξωθεν δέ με
γάμοι τ' ἐλῶσι Θεσσαλῶν καὶ ξύλλογοι
γυναικοπληθεῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἐξανέξομαι
λεύσσων δάμαρτος τῆς ἐμῆς ὁμήλικας.
ἐρεῖ δέ μ' ὅστις ἐχθρὸς ὢν κυρεῖ τάδε·
ἰδοῦ τὸν αἰσχρῶς ζῶνθ', ὃς οὐκ ἔτλη θανεῖν,
ἀλλ' ἣν ἔγημεν ἀντιδοὺς ἀψυχίᾳ
πέφευγεν Ἅιδην· εἶτ' ἀνὴρ εἶναι δοκεῖ;
στυγεῖ δὲ τοὺς τεκόντας, αὐτὸς οὐ θέλων
θανεῖν. τοιάνδε πρὸς κακοῖσι κληδόνα
ἕξω. τί μοι ζῆν δῆτα κύδιον, φίλοι,
κακῶς κλύοντι καὶ κακῶς πεπραγότι;

Thy wife hath departed:
Love tender and true
Hath she left:—stricken-hearted,
Wherein is this new?
Hath Death not unyoked from the chariot of Love full many ere you?

ADMETUS

Friends, I account the fortune of my wife
Happier than mine, albeit it seem not so.
For naught of grief shall touch her any more,
And glorious rest she finds from many toils.
But I, unmeet to live, my doom outrun,
Shall drag out bitter days: I know it now.
How shall I bear to enter this mine home?
Speaking to whom, and having speech of whom,
Shall I find joy of entering?—whither turn me?
The solitude within shall drive me forth,
Whenso I see my wife's couch tenantless,
And seats whereon she sat, and, 'neath the roof,
All foul the floor; when on my knees my babes
Falling shall weep their mother, servants moan
The peerless mistress from the mansion lost.
All this within: but from the world without
Me shall Thessalian bridals chase, and throngs
Where women gossip—oh, I shall not bear
On these, young matrons like my wife, to look!
And whatsoever foe I have shall scoff:
"Lo there who basely liveth—dared not die,
"But whom he wedded gave, a coward's ransom,
"And 'scaped from Hades. Count ye him a man?
"He hates his parents, though himself was loth
"To die!" Such ill report, besides my griefs,
Shall mine be. Ah, what honour is mine to live,
O friends, in evil fame, in evil plight?

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐγὼ καὶ διὰ μούσας *στρ. α'*
καὶ μετάρσιος ᾖξα, καὶ
πλείστων ἁψάμενος λόγων
κρεῖσσον οὐδὲν Ἀνάγκας
ηὗρον, οὐδέ τι φάρμακον
Θρῄσσαις ἐν σανίσιν, τὰς
Ὀρφεία κατέγραψεν
γῆρυς, οὐδ' ὅσα Φοῖβος Ἀ-
σκληπιάδαις ἔδωκε
φάρμακα πολυπόνοις
ἀντιτεμὼν βροτοῖσιν.

μόνας δ' οὔτ' ἐπὶ βωμοὺς *ἀντ. α'*
ἔστιν οὔτε βρέτας θεᾶς
ἐλθεῖν, οὐ σφαγίων κλύει.
μή μοι, πότνια, μείζων
ἔλθοις ἢ τὸ πρὶν ἐν βίῳ.
καὶ γὰρ Ζεὺς ὅ τι νεύσῃ,
σὺν σοὶ τοῦτο τελευτᾷ.
καὶ τὸν ἐν Χαλύβοις δαμά-
ζεις σὺ βίᾳ σίδαρον,
οὐδέ τις ἀποτόμου
λήματός ἐστιν αἰδώς.

στρ. β'

καὶ σ' ἐν ἀφύκτοισι χερῶν εἷλε θεὰ δεσμοῖς.
τόλμα δ'· οὐ γὰρ ἀνάξεις ποτ' ἔνερθεν

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

I have mused on the words of the wise,
  Of the mighty in song;
I have lifted mine heart to the skies,
I have searched all truth with mine eyes;
  But naught more strong
Than Fate have I found: there is naught
  In the tablets of Thrace,
Neither drugs whereof Orpheus taught,
Nor in all that Apollo brought
  To Asclepius' race,
When the herbs of healing he severed, and out of their anguish delivered
  The pain-distraught.

There is none other Goddess beside (*Ant.* 1)
  To the altars of whom
No man draweth near, nor hath cried
To her image, nor victim hath died,
  Averting her doom.
O Goddess, more mighty for ill
  Come not upon me
Than in days overpast: for his will
Even Zeus may in no wise fulfil
  Unholpen of thee.
Steel is molten as water before thee, but never relenting came o'er thee,
  Who art ruthless still.

(*Str.* 2)

Thee, friend, hath the Goddess gripped: from her hands never wrestler hath slipped.
Yet be strong to endure: never mourning shall bring our belovèd returning

κλαίων τοὺς φθιμένους ἄνω.
καὶ θεῶν σκότιοι φθίνουσι
παῖδες ἐν θανάτῳ.
φίλα μὲν ὅτ' ἦν μεθ' ἡμῶν,
φίλα δὲ †καὶ θανοῦσ' ἔσται†·
γενναιοτάταν δὲ πασᾶν
ἐζεύξω κλισίαις ἄκοιτιν.

ἀντ. β

μηδὲ νεκρῶν ὡς φθιμένων χῶμα νομιζέσθω
τύμβος σᾶς ἀλόχου, θεοῖσι δ' ὁμοίως
τιμάσθω, σέβας ἐμπόρων.
καί τις δοχμίαν κέλευθον
ἐμβαίνων τόδ' ἐρεῖ·
αὕτα ποτὲ προὔθαν' ἀνδρός,
νῦν δ' ἐστὶ μάκαιρα δαίμων·
χαῖρ', ὦ πότνι', εὖ δὲ δοίης.
τοῖαί νιν προσεροῦσι φᾶμαι.

καὶ μὴν ὅδ', ὡς ἔοικεν, Ἀλκμήνης γόνος,
Ἄδμητε, πρὸς σὴν ἑστίαν πορεύεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φίλον πρὸς ἄνδρα χρὴ λέγειν ἐλευθέρως,
Ἄδμητε, μομφὰς δ' οὐχ ὑπὸ σπλάγχνοις ἔχειν
σιγῶντ'. ἐγὼ δὲ σοῖς κακοῖσιν ἠξίουν
ἐγγὺς παρεστὼς ἐξετάζεσθαι φίλος·
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἔφραζες σῆς προκείμενον νέκυν
γυναικός, ἀλλά μ' ἐξένιζες ἐν δόμοις,
ὡς δὴ θυραίου πήματος σπουδὴν ἔχων.

From the nethergloom up to the light.
Yea, the heroes of Gods begotten,
They fade into darkness, forgotten
In death's chill night.
Dear was she in days ere we lost her,
Dear yet, though she lie with the dead.
None nobler shall Earth-mother foster
Than the wife of thy bed.

(*Ant.* 2)

Not as mounds of the dead which have died, so account we the tomb of thy bride ;
But O, let the worship and honour that we render to Gods rest upon her:
Unto her let the wayfarer pray.
As he treadeth the pathway that trendeth
Aside from the highway, and bendeth
At her-shrine, he shall say:
"Her life for her lord's was given ;
With the Blest now abides she on high.
Hail, Queen, show us grace from thine heaven!"
Even so shall they cry.

But lo, Alcmena's son, as seemeth, yonder,
Admetus, to thine hearth is journeying.

Enter HERCULES, *leading a woman wholly veiled.*

HERCULES

Unto a friend behoveth speech outspoken,
Admetus, not to hide within the breast
Murmurs unvoiced. I came mid thine affliction:
Fair claim was mine to rank amidst thy friends:
Thou told'st me not how lay thy wife a corpse;
Thou gavest me guest-welcome in thine home,
Making pretence of mourning for a stranger.

κἄστεψα κρᾶτα καὶ θεοῖς ἐλειψάμην
σπονδὰς ἐν οἴκοις δυστυχοῦσι τοῖσι σοῖς.
καὶ μέμφομαι μὲν μέμφομαι παθὼν τάδε,
οὐ μήν σε λυπεῖν ἐν κακοῖσι βούλομαι.
ὧν δ᾽ εἵνεχ᾽ ἥκω δεῦρ᾽ ὑποστρέψας πάλιν
λέξω. γυναῖκα τήνδε μοι σῶσον λαβών,
ἕως ἂν ἵππους δεῦρο Θρῃκίας ἄγων
ἔλθω, τύραννον Βιστόνων κατακτανών.
πράξας δ᾽ ὃ μὴ τύχοιμι, νοστήσαιμι γάρ,
δίδωμι τήνδε σοῖσι προσπολεῖν δόμοις.
πολλῷ δὲ μόχθῳ χεῖρας ἦλθεν εἰς ἐμάς·
ἀγῶνα γὰρ πάνδημον εὑρίσκω τινὰς
τιθέντας, ἀθληταῖσιν ἄξιον πόνον,
ὅθεν κομίζω τήνδε νικητήρια
λαβών· τὰ μὲν γὰρ κοῦφα τοῖς νικῶσιν ἦν
ἵππους ἄγεσθαι, τοῖσι δ᾽ αὖ τὰ μείζονα
νικῶσι, πυγμὴν καὶ πάλην, βουφόρβια·
γυνὴ δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῖς εἵπετ᾽· ἐντυχόντι δὲ
αἰσχρὸν παρεῖναι κέρδος ἦν τόδ᾽ εὐκλεές.
ἀλλ᾽, ὥσπερ εἶπον, σοὶ μέλειν γυναῖκα χρή·
οὐ γὰρ κλοπαίαν, ἀλλὰ σὺν πόνῳ λαβὼν
ἥκω· χρόνῳ δὲ καὶ σύ μ᾽ αἰνέσεις ἴσως.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὔτοι σ᾽ ἀτίζων οὐδ᾽ ἐν ἐχθροῖσιν τιθεὶς
ἔκρυψ᾽ ἐμῆς γυναικὸς ἀθλίους τύχας·
ἀλλ᾽ ἄλγος ἄλγει τοῦτ᾽ ἂν ἦν προσκείμενον,
εἴ του πρὸς ἄλλου δώμαθ᾽ ὡρμήθης ξένου·
ἅλις δὲ κλαίειν τοὐμὸν ἦν ἐμοὶ κακόν.
γυναῖκα δ᾽, εἴ πως ἔστιν, αἰτοῦμαί σ᾽, ἄναξ,
ἄλλον τιν᾽ ὅστις μὴ πέπονθεν οἷ᾽ ἐγὼ
σῴζειν ἄνωχθι Θεσσαλῶν· πολλοὶ δέ σοι
ξένοι Φεραίων· μή μ᾽ ἀναμνήσῃς κακῶν.

I wreathed mine head, I spilled unto the Gods
Drink-offerings in a stricken house, even thine.
I blame thee, thus mishandled, yea, I blame;
Yet nowise is my will to gall thy grief.

But wherefore hither turning back I come,
This will I tell. Take, guard for me this maid,
Till, leading hitherward the Thracian mares,
I come from slaughter of Bistonia's lord.
But if I fall—no, no! I *must* return!—
I give her then, for service of thine halls.
Prize of hard toil unto mine hands she came:
For certain men I found but now arraying
An athlete-strife, toil-worthy, for all comers,
Whence I have won and bring this victor's meed.

Horses there were for them to take which won
The light foot's triumph; but for hero-strife,
Boxing and wrestling, oxen were the guerdon;
A woman made it richer. Shame it seemed
To hap thereon, and slip this glorious gain.
But, as I said, this woman be thy care;
For no thief's prize, but toil-achieved, I bring her.
Yea, one day thou perchance shalt say 'twas well.

ADMETUS

Not flouting thee, nor counting among foes,
My wife's unhappy fate I hid from thee.
But this had been but grief uppiled on grief,
Hadst thou sped hence to be another's guest;
And mine own ills sufficed me to bewail.
Yon maid—I pray thee, if it may be, prince,
Bid some Thessalian ward her, who hath not
Suffered as I: thou hast many friends in Pherae.
Oh, waken not remembrance of my grief!

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην τήνδ' ὁρῶν ἐν δώμασιν
ἄδακρυς εἶναι· μὴ νοσοῦντί μοι νόσον
προσθῇς· ἅλις γὰρ συμφορᾷ βαρύνομαι.
ποῦ καὶ τρέφοιτ' ἂν δωμάτων νέα γυνή;
νέα γάρ, ὡς ἐσθῆτι καὶ κόσμῳ πρέπει.
πότερα μετ' ἀνδρῶν δῆτ' ἐνοικήσει στέγην;
καὶ πῶς ἀκραιφνὴς ἐν νέοις στρωφωμένη
ἔσται; τὸν ἡβῶνθ', Ἡράκλεις, οὐ ῥᾴδιον
εἴργειν· ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ προμηθίαν ἔχω.
ἢ τῆς θανούσης θάλαμον εἰσβήσας τρέφω;
καὶ πῶς ἐπεισφρῶ τήνδε τῷ κείνης λέχει;
διπλῆν φοβοῦμαι μέμψιν, ἔκ τε δημοτῶν,
μή τίς μ' ἐλέγξῃ τὴν ἐμὴν εὐεργέτιν
προδόντ' ἐν ἄλλης δεμνίοις πίτνειν νέας,
καὶ τῆς θανούσης· ἀξία δ' ἐμοὶ σέβειν·
πολλὴν πρόνοιαν δεῖ μ' ἔχειν. σὺ δ', ὦ γύναι,
ἥτις ποτ' εἶ σύ, ταὔτ' ἔχουσ' Ἀλκήστιδι
μορφῆς μέτρ' ἴσθι καὶ προσῄξαι δέμας.
οἴμοι. κόμιζε πρὸς θεῶν ἐξ ὀμμάτων
γυναῖκα τήνδε, μή μ' ἕλῃς ᾑρημένον.
δοκῶ γὰρ αὐτὴν εἰσορῶν γυναῖχ' ὁρᾶν
ἐμήν· θολοῖ δὲ καρδίαν, ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων
πηγαὶ κατερρώγασιν· ὦ τλήμων ἐγώ,
ὡς ἄρτι πένθους τοῦδε γεύομαι πικροῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἔχοιμ' ἂν εὖ λέγειν τύχην·
χρὴ δ', ὅστις εἶσι, καρτερεῖν θεοῦ δόσιν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰ γὰρ τοσαύτην δύναμιν εἶχον ὥστε σὴν
εἰς φῶς πορεῦσαι νερτέρων ἐκ δωμάτων
γυναῖκα καί σοι τήνδε πορσῦναι χάριν.

I could not, seeing her mine halls within,
Be tearless: add not hurt unto mine hurt;
Burdened enough am I by mine affliction.
Nay, in mine house where should a young maid lodge?—
For vesture and adorning speak her young:—
What, 'neath the men's roof shall her lodging be?
And how unsullied, dwelling with young men?
Not easy is it, Hercules, to curb
The young: herein do I take thought for thee.
Or shall I ope to her my dead wife's bower?
How!—cause her to usurp my lost love's bed?
Twofold reproach I dread—first, from my folk,
Lest any say that, traitor to my saviour,
I fall upon another woman's bed;
Then, from my dead wife—oh, she is reverence-worthy!—
Of her must I be heedful. Woman, thou,
Whoso thou art, know that thy body's stature
Is as Alcestis, and thy form as hers.
Ah me!—lead, for the Gods' sake, from my sight
This woman! Take not my captivity captive.
For, as I look on her, methinks I see
My wife: she stirs mine heart with turmoil: fountains
Of tears burst from mine eyes. O wretched I!
Now first I taste this grief's full bitterness.

CHORUS

In sooth thy fortune can I not commend:
Yet all Heaven's visitations must we bear.

HERCULES

O that such might I had as back to bring
To light thy wife from nethergloom abodes,
And to bestow this kindness upon thee!

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σάφ' οἶδα βούλεσθαί σ' ἄν. ἀλλὰ ποῦ τόδε;
οὐκ ἔστι τοὺς θανόντας εἰς φάος μολεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μή νυν ὑπέρβαλλ', ἀλλ' ἐναισίμως φέρε.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ῥᾷον παραινεῖν ἢ παθόντα καρτερεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἂν προκόπτοις, εἰ θέλοις ἀεὶ στένειν;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔγνωκα καὐτός, ἀλλ' ἔρως τις ἐξάγει.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τὸ γὰρ φιλῆσαι τὸν θανόντ' ἄγει δάκρυ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀπώλεσέν με, κἄτι μᾶλλον ἢ λέγω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γυναικὸς ἐσθλῆς ἤμπλακες· τίς ἀντερεῖ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὥστ' ἄνδρα τόνδε μηκέθ' ἥδεσθαι βίῳ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χρόνος μαλάξει, νῦν δ' ἔθ' ἡβᾷ σοι κακόν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

χρόνον λέγοις ἄν, εἰ χρόνος τὸ κατθανεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γυνή σε παύσει καὶ νέου γάμου πόθοι.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σίγησον· οἷον εἶπας. οὐκ ἂν ᾠόμην.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ'; οὐ γαμεῖς γάρ, ἀλλὰ χηρεύσει λέχος;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἥτις τῷδε συγκλιθήσεται.

ADMETUS

Fain would'st thou, well I know. But wherefore this?
It cannot be the dead to light should come.

HERCULES

O'ershoot not thou the mark; bear bravely all.

ADMETUS

Easier to exhort than suffer and be strong.

HERCULES

But what thy profit, though for aye thou moan?

ADMETUS

I too know this; yet love drives me distraught.

HERCULES

Love for the lost—ay, that draws forth the tear.

ADMETUS

She hath undone me more than words can tell.

HERCULES

A good wife hast thou lost, who shall gainsay?

ADMETUS

So that thy friend hath no more joy in life.

HERCULES

Time shall bring healing; now is thy grief young.

ADMETUS

Time—time?—O yea, if this thy Time be Death!

HERCULES

A young wife, new love-yearning, shall console thee.

ADMETUS

Hush!—what say'st thou?—I could not think thereon!

HERCULES

How?—wilt not wed, but widowed keep thy couch?

ADMETUS

Lives not the woman that shall couch with me.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μῶν τὴν θανοῦσαν ὠφελεῖν τι προσδοκᾷς;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

κείνην ὅπουπερ ἔστι τιμᾶσθαι χρεών.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αἰνῶ μὲν αἰνῶ· μωρίαν δ' ὀφλισκάνεις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὡς μήποτ' ἄνδρα τόνδε νυμφίον καλῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐπῄνεσ' ἀλόχῳ πιστὸς οὕνεκ' εἶ φίλος.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θάνοιμ' ἐκείνην καίπερ οὐκ οὖσαν προδούς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

δέχου νυν εἴσω τήνδε γενναίων δόμων.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

μή, πρός σε τοῦ σπείραντος ἄντομαι Διός.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ μὴν ἁμαρτήσει γε μὴ δράσας τάδε.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

καὶ δρῶν γε λύπῃ καρδίαν δηχθήσομαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πιθοῦ· τάχ' ἂν γὰρ εἰς δέον πέσοι χάρις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ·
εἴθ' ἐξ ἀγῶνος τήνδε μὴ 'λαβές ποτε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

νικῶντι μέντοι καὶ σὺ συννικᾷς ἐμοί.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἡ γυνὴ δ' ἀπελθέτω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄπεισιν, εἰ χρή· πρῶτα δ' εἰ χρεὼν ἄθρει.

HERCULES

Look'st thou that this shall profit aught the dead?

ADMETUS

I needs must honour her where'er she be.

HERCULES

Good—good—yet this the world calls foolishness.

ADMETUS

So be it, so thou call me bridegroom never.

HERCULES

I praise thee, in that leal thou art to her.

ADMETUS

I?—false to her, though dead?—may I die first!

HERCULES

Receive this woman then these halls within.

ADMETUS

Nay!—I implore thee by thy father Zeus!

HERCULES

Yet shalt thou err if thou do not this thing.

ADMETUS

Yet shall mine heart be tortured, if I do it.

HERCULES

Yield thou: this grace may prove perchance a duty.

ADMETUS

O that in strife thou ne'er hadst won this maid!

HERCULES

Yet thy friend's victory is surely thine.

ADMETUS

Well said: yet let the woman hence depart.

HERCULES

Yea—if need be. First look well—need it be?

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

χρή, σοῦ γε μὴ μέλλοντος ὀργαίνειν ἐμοί.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰδώς τι κἀγὼ τήνδ' ἔχω προθυμίαν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

νίκα νυν. οὐ μὴν ἀνδάνοντά μοι ποιεῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἔσθ' ὅθ' ἡμᾶς αἰνέσεις· πιθοῦ μόνον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

κομίζετ', εἰ χρὴ τήνδε δέξασθαι δόμοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν μεθείην τὴν γυναῖκα προσπόλοις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σὺ δ' αὐτὸς αὐτὴν εἴσαγ', εἰ βούλει, δόμους.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰς σὰς μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε θήσομαι χέρας.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν θίγοιμι· δῶματ' εἰσελθεῖν πάρα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τῇ σῇ πέποιθα χειρὶ δεξιᾷ μόνῃ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἄναξ, βιάζει μ' οὐ θέλοντα δρᾶν τάδε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τόλμα προτεῖναι χεῖρα καὶ θιγεῖν ξένης.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

καὶ δὴ προτείνω, Γοργόν' ὣς καρατομῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔχεις ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔχω.

ADMETUS

Needs must—save thou wilt else be wroth with me.

HERCULES

I too know what I do, insisting thus.

ADMETUS

Have then thy will: thy pleasure is my pain.

HERCULES

Yet one day shalt thou praise me: only yield.

ADMETUS (*to attendants*)

Lead ye her, if mine halls must needs receive.

HERCULES

Nay, to no servants' hands will I commit her.

ADMETUS

Thou lead her in then, if it seems thee good.

HERCULES

Nay, but in thine hands will I place her—thine.

ADMETUS

I will not touch her! Open stand my doors.

HERCULES

Unto thy right hand only trust I her.

ADMETUS

King, thou dost force me, sore against my will!

HERCULES

Be strong: stretch forth thine hand and touch thy guest.

ADMETUS (*turning his face away*)

I do, as one who doth behead a Gorgon.

HERCULES

Hast her?

ADMETUS

I have.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ναί, σῷζέ νυν, καὶ τὸν Διὸς
φήσεις ποτ' εἶναι παῖδα γενναῖον ξένον.
βλέψον πρὸς αὐτήν, εἴ τι σῇ δοκεῖ πρέπειν
γυναικί· λύπης δ' εὐτυχῶν μεθίστασο.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ θεοί, τί λέξω; θαῦμ' ἀνέλπιστον τόδε·
γυναῖκα λεύσσω τὴν ἐμὴν ἐτητύμως,
ἢ κέρτομός με θεοῦ τις ἐκπλήσσει χαρά;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ τήνδ' ὁρᾷς δάμαρτα σήν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὅρα γε μή τι φάσμα νερτέρων τόδ' ᾖ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ ψυχαγωγὸν τόνδ' ἐποιήσω ξένον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἣν ἔθαπτον εἰσορῶ δάμαρτ' ἐμήν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σάφ' ἴσθ'. ἀπιστεῖν δ' οὔ σε θαυμάζω τύχην.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θίγω, προσείπω ζῶσαν ὡς δάμαρτ' ἐμήν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πρόσειπ'· ἔχεις γὰρ πᾶν ὅσονπερ ἤθελες.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ φιλτάτης γυναικὸς ὄμμα καὶ δέμας,
ἔχω σ' ἀέλπτως, οὔποτ' ὄψεσθαι δοκῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔχεις· φθόνος δὲ μὴ γένοιτό τις θεῶν.

HERCULES

Yea, guard her. Thou shalt call
The child of Zeus one day a noble guest.
[*Raises the veil, and discloses* ALCESTIS.
Look on her, if in aught she seems to thee
Like to thy wife. Step forth from grief to bliss.

ADMETUS

What shall I say?—Gods! Marvel this unhoped for!
My wife do I behold in very sooth,
Or doth some god-sent mockery-joy distract me?

HERCULES

Not so; but this thou seëst is thy wife.

ADMETUS

What if this be some phantom from the shades?

HERCULES

No ghost-upraiser hast thou ta'en for guest.

ADMETUS

How?—whom I buried do I see—my wife?

HERCULES

Doubt not: yet might'st thou well mistrust thy fortune.

ADMETUS

As wife, as living, may I touch, address her?

HERCULES

Speak to her: all thou didst desire thou hast.

ADMETUS

Oh dearest!—wife!—sweet face!—belovèd form!
Past hope I have thee! Never I thought to see thee!

HERCULES

Thou hast: may no God of thy bliss be jealous.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ τοῦ μεγίστου Ζηνὸς εὐγενὲς τέκνον,
εὐδαιμονοίης, καί σ' ὁ φιτύσας πατὴρ
σῴζοι· σὺ γὰρ δὴ τἄμ' ἀνώρθωσας μόνος.
πῶς τήνδ' ἔπεμψας νέρθεν εἰς φάος τόδε;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μάχην συνάψας δαιμόνων τῷ κυρίῳ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ποῦ τόνδε Θανάτῳ φῂς ἀγῶνα συμβαλεῖν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τύμβον παρ' αὐτὸν ἐκ λόχου μάρψας χεροῖν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τί γάρ ποθ' ἥδ' ἄναυδος ἕστηκεν γυνή;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὔπω θέμις σοι τῆσδε προσφωνημάτων
κλύειν, πρὶν ἂν θεοῖσι τοῖσι νερτέροις
ἀφαγνίσηται καὶ τρίτον μόλῃ φάος.
ἀλλ' εἴσαγ' εἴσω τήνδε· καὶ δίκαιος ὢν
τὸ λοιπόν, Ἄδμητ', εὐσέβει περὶ ξένους.
καὶ χαῖρ'· ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν προκείμενον πόνον
Σθενέλου τυράννῳ παιδὶ πορσυνῶ μολών.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

μεῖνον παρ' ἡμῖν καὶ συνέστιος γενοῦ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αὖθις τόδ' ἔσται, νῦν δ' ἐπείγεσθαί με δεῖ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης, νόστιμον δ' ἔλθοις ὁδόν.
ἀστοῖς δὲ πάσῃ τ' ἐννέπω τετραρχίᾳ,
χοροὺς ἐπ' ἐσθλαῖς συμφοραῖσιν ἱστάναι
βωμούς τε κνισᾶν βουθύτοισι προστροπαῖς.

ADMETUS

O scion nobly-born of Zeus most high,
Blessings on thee! The Father who begat thee
Keep thee! Thou only hast restored my fortunes.
How didst thou bring her from the shades to light?

HERCULES

I closed in conflict with the Lord of Spirits.

ADMETUS

Where, say'st thou, didst thou fight this fight with Death?

HERCULES

From ambush by the tomb mine hands ensnared him.

ADMETUS

Now wherefore speechless standeth thus my wife?

HERCULES

'Tis not vouchsafed thee yet to hear her voice,
Ere to the Powers beneath the earth she be
Unconsecrated, and the third day come.
But lead her in, and, just man as thou art,
Henceforth, Admetus, reverence still the guest.
Farewell. But I must go, and work the work
Set by the king, the son of Sthenelus.

ADMETUS

Abide with us, a sharer of our hearth.

HERCULES

Hereafter this: now must I hasten on.

ADMETUS

O prosper thou, and come again in peace!
[*Exit* HERCULES.
Through all my realm I publish to my folk
That, for these blessings, dances they array,
And that atonement-fumes from altars rise.

νῦν γὰρ μεθηρμόσμεσθα βελτίω βίον
τοῦ πρόσθεν· οὐ γὰρ εὐτυχῶν ἀρνήσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,
πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκήτων πόρον ηὗρε θεός.
τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

For now to happier days than those o'erpast
Have we attained. I own me blest indeed.

CHORUS

O the works of the Gods—in manifold forms they reveal them:
Manifold things unhoped-for the Gods to accomplishment bring.
And the things that we looked for, the Gods deign not to fulfil them;
And the paths undiscerned of our eyes, the Gods unseal them.
So fell this marvellous thing.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.

END OF VOL. IV

RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED,
BRUNSWICK ST., STAMFORD ST., S.E.,
AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

DATE DUE

6-11-83			
7/3/85			
4/4/86			
6/7/89			
6·23-90			
1·7·91			
7-24-91			
11·10 91			
2·11·92			
3/16/92			
12·22·92			
9·28·94			